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Outside the Fold

I. Among the 'Swabians' of Hungary

by JOHN LEHMANN

Scattered and numerically weak though most of them are, the groups of German-speaking people living in Central Europe outside the present frontiers of the Reich have, as potential instruments of Nazi policy, an international significance out of all proportion to their size. Mr Lehmann recently visited certain of these groups on behalf of The Geographical Magazine and, in a series of articles of which this is the first, will summarize his impressions

It was in the spring of 1938 that I first made my acquaintance with Hungary's German colonists. Only a few weeks before Austria had gone down before the Nazi advance, and the German army, the military might of an organized people now numbering nearly 75 millions, was suddenly at the gates. At Hegyeshalom, instead of the slow rich brogue of the easy-going Austrians, the Hungarian frontier guards heard the harsh, clipped dialect of

the North, the speech of Frederick the Great and Bismarck, just beyond their thin green-white-and-red barrier. It was a moment when all the small countries of the Danube saw ominous clouds gathering in their sky, when the ancient djinn of Pan-Germanism seemed to have emerged in a flash from the bottle of Versailles to mock their independence.

The bus left the smart modern villas of Buda's outskirts behind and plunged down



(Compiled from material contained in maps published by the General Staff, War Office, in 1918)



John Lehmann

'For three minutes the village seemed to be fast asleep in the afternoon sun, that beat back from the whitewashed walls of the low cottages . . .'

through woods that brought the Wiener Wald pleasantly to mind. As the city receded, the late night discussions with journalist friends, that had revealed to me the political tension under the country's outward calm, slipped from my thoughts. An old peasant woman opposite me, with a faded pink kerchief tied to frame the wrinkled leather of her face and a large grocery basket resting on her widespread lap, was confiding a long, slow story in Hungarian to a girl next to her, who nodded now and then and added monosyllables of her own. She was dressed in town fashion, and when she turned to a young man on the other side of her, I noticed she spoke in German; not the slow, oddly intoned German that Magyars adopt and natives of the Reich love to mimic, but something that reminded me of the Black Forest and the West.

They followed me out of the bus when we reached the village of B—— and dis-

appeared down one of the lanes. I was left in the dusty main road, alone. For three minutes the village seemed to be fast asleep in the early afternoon sun, that beat back from the cracked ruts at my feet, and from the whitewashed walls of the low cottages except where their wooden verandahs shielded them. They were neatly aligned facing one another, in herring-bone pattern, behind the two rows of chestnut-trees that stepped down the slope with the road. The leaves of the chestnuts were still as if fixed in the palest amber, absorbing heat and light. In the cottage gardens the last breath of wind, it might have been hours, or days ago, had shaken some white blossom to earth from the acacia clusters; but now these clusters hung as if painted on a drop-scene. The five half-open, orange-red flowers of a rose bush just over the fence beside me seemed to quiver ever so slightly, but it was the illusion of heat, not even the faintest breeze.

Then suddenly half a dozen children ran into the road, shrilly crying at one another, leaping and pointing, and scattered downhill in the process of some mysterious game. The spell broke: I became aware of hens clucking, a murmur of men's voices near me, and in the distance the rumbling of carts. I walked slowly along the road until I saw a woman washing at an open tub in one of the yards. Beside her, under the verandah from which dangled thick bunches of last year's golden-yellow *kukuruz*, sat a little girl with blonde hair in pigtails, demurely rocking a doll. At the bottom of the yard a horse and cart were waiting patiently; on the driver's seat were perched two minute creatures in Hungarian schoolboys' caps.

I went boldly in, took a photograph of the young mother, who grinned back at me without stopping her work, and then walked down to take another of the cart and its occupants. As I raised my Leica,

I asked them whether they were German. Overcome with the strain of unexpected posing, they gazed at me dumbly at first, and then one of them muttered something shyly, wriggling on the seat. It didn't sound at all German to me. "Yes, yes, they're German," shouted the mother from her washtub. "They talk Hungarian as often as not, you can't help that, but they're of true German stock." She paused in her wringing and scrubbing, and put her hands on her hips, still smiling. "We're all Germans here," she said, "except for a few Hungarians, officials and such, and one or two Jews in business."

I asked her where I could sit in the shade and cool my thirst. She pointed down the hill. The wheel of a public well stood up in the middle of the road, and behind it a large tree-shaded building, the inn. "My cousin's," she said with pride, "the biggest in the place." The two small boys watched me go with enor-



John Lehmann

'Two minute creatures in Hungarian schoolboys' caps . . .'

By comparison with their Magyar neighbours, the German colonists in Hungary are sober folk, and in contrast to the brilliant costumes worn by Magyar peasant women, the dresses of these 'Swabian' girls seem austere and plain



Dr K. Morris

Dr K. Morris



But Swabian sobriety is still tempered by the easy-going spirit of old Austria-Hungary (here represented by two Swabian rural guards outside a village inn) and has not yet been transformed into the assertive 'race-consciousness' that the Nazi creed ordains

mous eyes. The little girl ran across, still clutching her doll, to the gate, to get a close view of the stranger who seemed by dress and speech neither German nor Hungarian.

The cousin turned out to be as portly and as courteous in his welcome as any innkeeper in Grinzing; but I fancied I detected some lurking bitterness in his face, in the way he spoke to his family, who moved shadowily within the cottage. He brought a glass of wine and a soda siphon to my table under the chestnut tree. I asked him how things were going. "Bad, very bad." He made a face and flicked a fly off his sleeve angrily. Why were things going so badly? "The Jews," he said curtly. "This Jewish question's got to be settled." I pressed him to explain the grounds of his complaint. "They're ruining everything," he said sweepingly. "Over there"—he nodded in the direction of Budapest—"why, they're as thick as flies. You might think you were in Jerusalem." He gazed menacingly at the pebbles at his feet.

Two villagers had just come in and seated themselves at the next table, and he got up to serve them. Then he came heavily back to me. I asked him what the village lived from. "Farming mostly," he answered, sticking his thumbs in his braces. "And then there are the tourists in summer. It's a popular bit of country. Mainly Jews from Budapest. But nobody's coming this season. The worst season I've known for a long time. Politics." He seemed oblivious of any contradiction between what he had just said and his complaint that the Jews were ruining everything.

Was the Government popular, I went on? "Ah. . . ." He stared at me hard and doubtfully for a moment. "The Government—they're all right." He was clearly disinclined to pursue the subject, and relieved when I asked him how German colonists like himself got on in general with the Hungarians. "The Hungarians are a

decent lot," he said emphatically. "It must be near on two hundred years, or more maybe, since we came over here—yes, from Swabia it was—and we've always got on with them. It's the Jews. Some countries have ways of dealing with them. . . . Things are coming to a head here, mark my words. It can't last."

The two villagers could no longer restrain themselves from joining in the conversation.

"What I say is," began the older of the two, a man of about fifty with a mild, typically Swabian face, "you can't just speak of the Jews in a body like that. Why, some of them are poor devils like the rest of us."

"You're right there, Hans, you're right there. Poor devils like the rest of us." The younger man nodded as he spoke.



John Lehmann

'The painted saints on their pedestals among the shrubs glistened in their wetness . . .'

The innkeeper said nothing, but gazed morosely at the flower-pots that hung from his eaves.

"It's the rich Jews," the older man went on. "The bankers. The capitalists. They get in and corrupt everything. You can't stop them."

"And those Eastern Jews," added the younger man. "From Poland and Rumania, you know. They're the cause of all the unrest."

"You think there's a lot of unrest in the country, then?" I asked. The younger man looked at the other two before answering. "Things are far from settled," he said at last. The innkeeper stared up into the chestnut leaves. "*Es kocht was*," he growled suddenly. "There's something brewing. . . ."

I took my leave, and they all wished me

a pleasant journey. I wandered up the road again. They were coming home from the fields, the carts were piled with hay. Horses stood about in the court-yards, swishing their tails. I took a short cut back to the bus-stop, through a little lane filled with geese and hens, that led past the church. I noticed that the bottoms of the telegraph poles were all daubed with a cross and some rough inscription round it. I made out the name SZALASI on one. And the same on the next—and the next. I remembered the arrests and the attempt to suppress Major Szalasi's fascist organization the year before, the accusations that it was supported by a foreign power. I was just in time for the bus. The little village with its loaded, rumbling carts, the neat white cottages and garden patches disappeared round the bend. Nothing could have looked more peaceful, more innocent.

A few months later, I passed through the village again. It was August, German manœuvres had begun, the Czech crisis was deepening. The Hungarian Army was holding its manœuvres too, and as I arrived, early on a rainy morning, a bedraggled column with its guns and field kitchens trailed Budapest-wards through the main street. The villagers took little or no interest, but there seemed to be no feeling of hostility, none of the tension that the appearance of Czech military formations was causing in Sudetenland. It was all so much part of the pattern that had existed for centuries. The three or four hundred thousand German colonists that existed in Hungary (before the return of Upper Hungary in November) lived scattered about the country, sometimes in compact villages such as B——, but as often as not in mixed communities with the Hungarians. They had been brought in at the beginning of the 18th century after the Turks had retreated, when the land was ravaged and the population reduced, and industrious, intelligent groups of colonists were badly needed. Their



John Lehmann

The slogans daubed on the bottoms of the telegraph poles showed that Major Szalasi's pro-Nazi party was not without support among Hungary's Germans



John Lehmann

'The Hungarian Army was holding its manœuvres. A bedraggled column with its guns and field kitchens trailed Budapest-wards through the main street . . .'



John Lehmann

'A cart loaded with pumpkins from the fields began to go its rounds from door to door . . .'



John Lehmann

"Pose for him, Lisl! Es ist nichts dabei"

feeling of superiority to the natives, formed thus by the circumstances of their arrival, seems to have remained; thrift and hard work and sobriety kept them on a higher standard of living than the Hungarians, and an undercurrent of distrust seems always to have existed between the two peoples, though in recent times it has never been very acute.

After the war, in diminished Hungary of Trianon, they kept their own papers and their Cultural Union and a certain number of separate German schools, but the tendency of governments in Budapest has been to restrict rather than to allow further liberty to their political and cultural activities. It was, however, only when the Nazis came to power in Germany and undertook the vigorous remodelling of the whole organization of Germans settled abroad in their own

interests, that Magyars, determined to maintain to the utmost their country's independence, began to feel that the Svábas were becoming a serious problem. Fascist ideas spread rapidly among them, Major Szalasi's pro-Nazi party received their strong support. Nothing more natural for these colonists than to feel that their great Mother-country, whose power in Europe seemed to increase week by week under the new régime, and whose importance as a customer for the produce of their farms grew simultaneously, would soon once more control their destinies, directly or indirectly. In August, Szalasi had been, in spite of all moves by his sympathisers near the Government to prevent it, sentenced to a long term of imprisonment, and the movement seemed on the defensive. But Austria had fallen, nevertheless. And a couple of months later the Czech power had been broken, and Hungary's frontiers pushed up once more towards the Carpathians. What, these villagers might well ask themselves, had brought that signal triumph but the power of Germany under the Nazis? . . .

As the last soldiers trudged out of sight, the sun came struggling through the clouds, the pretty cottage gardens and the painted saints on their pedestals among the shrubs glistened in their wetness. A prize sow trotted grunting across the muddy village green, pursued by cheering urchins, and a cart loaded with pumpkins from the fields began to go its rounds from door to door. Before the sun disappeared again I determined to use my camera to best advantage. I prowled round from yard to yard: in one, a typically German woman was preparing the midday meal for her family, kneading dough in the sunlight of her cottage doorway. I raised the Leica to my eye, and she grinned bashfully and made as if to disappear. "Go on, go on," shouted her husband suddenly from behind me. "Pose for him, Lisl! *Es ist nichts dabei.*"

Fishy Expressions

Photographed by Schall



Gad, sir, the Editor is right! There are better fish here than ever came out of the sea



Perhaps this dress *is* a little too young for me



You won't need your orchestra, Sir Henry. I can play 'em all



My heart bleeds for the victims of the outrage . . .



If the Hon. Member would consult his head as well as his heart . . .



For a moment we eyed each other . . . Then suddenly the tiger sprang—



—and when I came to, I found the brute had taken both my legs

Cities of the Mayas

III. Uxmal and Chichén Itzá

by GRAHAM HUTTON

From the ruins of the Old Maya Empire at Palenque and Copan, we turn to those of the New Empire in Yucatán. Considering them, we may ask ourselves whether the authoritarian States of today bear within them the seed of any contribution to the growth of the human spirit by which, finally, a State is to be measured, greater than that borne by the rigid, repressive theocracies which clothed themselves in such material splendour at Uxmal and Chichén Itzá

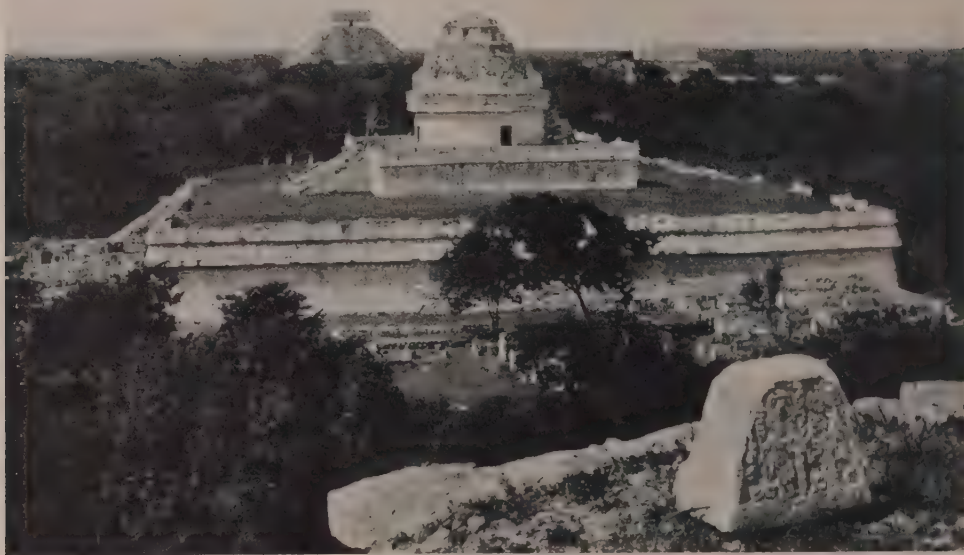
BEFORE the advent of the aeroplane, the peninsula of Yucatán with its magnificent archaeological treasures could only be reached by a tortuous and primitive journey in indifferent steamships. It is a queer country; flatter than any other State of Mexico or any of the West Indian islands; jutting out to divide the Gulf of Mexico from the hurricane-swept Caribbean. The wild south-eastern trade winds tear across that sea unbroken in their course; and the almost impenetrable jungle that, from the aeroplane, one sees spread like a thick carpet over a great part of Yucatán, affords apparent evidence of heavy rainfall, though the rainfall is, in fact, uncertain and spasmodic. To this level peninsula, some time after their civilization had reached maturity at Copan, Palenque and other places in the Central American highlands, the Mayas of the Old Empire completed a migration that left their ancient cities silent and deserted.

Omitting the painful stages of perhaps a fortnight's trip by land and sea, we flew in the space of a single day from Mexico City to Mérida, the capital of Yucatán. Thence we set forth for Uxmal and Chichén Itzá, the show-pieces of the New Maya Empire's architecture. Uxmal lies about 45 miles, through vast *henequén* (sisal) plantations supplying the hemp industry, to the south-west of Mérida; Chichén Itzá is somewhat less than 100 miles due east of that city, and a rather shorter distance from the Caribbean Sea. Other ruins near Uxmal are many; but round Chichén Itzá, so far as is yet known,

very few. There is a reason for this, as for the wide separation of the two main sites of the New Maya Empire.

When the Mayas trekked northward from their Central American settlements into Yucatán, they left hilly and well-watered country for the region round Uxmal (pronounced 'Oosh-mahl') which was, and indeed still is, unhealthy and not too well supplied with water. The first of their migrations is thought to have started about the beginning of the Christian era; and the Uxmal sites appear to have attained their most resplendent level of art and culture not long after the 7th century





Bodil Christensen

The ruins of Chichén Itzá represent the zenith of civilization in the New Maya Empire. Here are seen, in the centre, the so-called Observatory; behind it, the Pyramid of Kukulcán

A.D. Thus, the New Empire itself falls into two main periods: this early period, when the south-western sector of the province of modern Yucatán was settled; and a later one, when Chichén Itzá was developed, in the 7th or 8th century, reaching its zenith in the 12th century. The settlers here bore the totem of the serpent, or *itzá*. They grouped their mud huts, supported on reeds and thatched with wide eaves, round the magnificent stone buildings, worked as in the Old Empire without metal but with wooden or stone implements; and the township surrounded the only reliable water supplies in Yucatán during the arid summers. These are the *cenotes*, or water-holes, often many yards across, naturally worn through the porous stone beneath the soil to underground channels. The name Chichén Itzá means, apparently, 'the mouth of the water-hole of the Itzá (or serpent-totem) folk'.

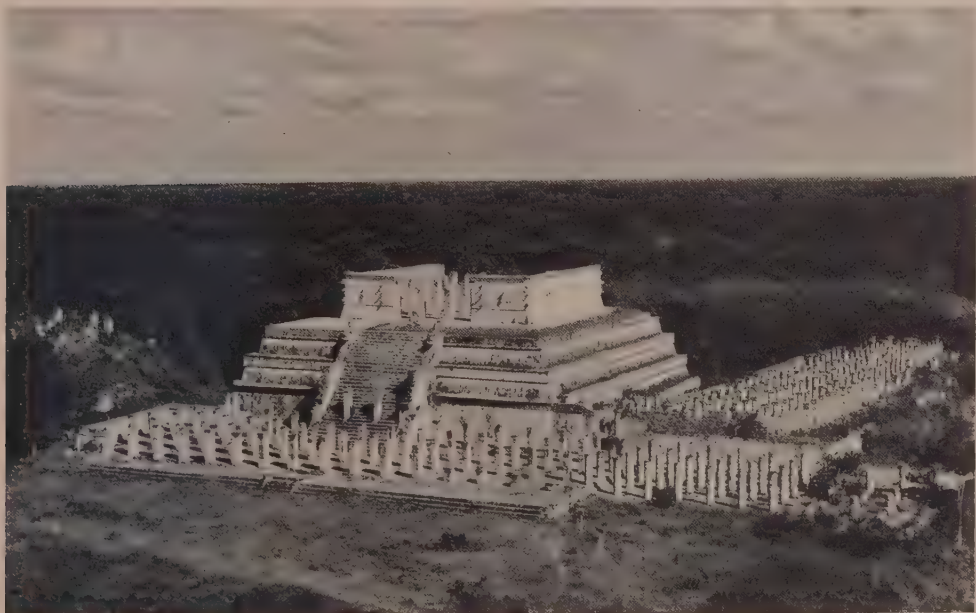
It is important to bear in mind the distinction between the Mayas who founded these two settlements; otherwise the architectural details of the existing ruins seem confusing and even contradictory. When you realize that perhaps four centuries separate the best work at Uxmal from the best at Chichén, things become clearer. Moreover, an even more important factor must now be stated. Chichén Itzá, the latest and most floridly resplendent city of the New Empire, bore the brunt of an external, non-Maya influence: that of the Central Mexican plateau, the Toltec culture, which erected the pre-Aztec pyramids and temples round Mexico City and with which is associated the totem of the serpent plumed with the feathers of the Quetzal bird, *i.e.* 'the plumed serpent'.

Thus, in brief, but therefore with all the risks of error implicit in such summaries, we may say that four distinct influences

were at work in the culture of the New Empire. First, the gradually developing culture of the settlements in the south-western sector. Secondly, the mature influence of the Old Empire brought to these settlements from the 7th century onwards. Thirdly, the internal wars or economic disasters which seem to have caused the New Empire Mayas to centre round three cities in particular: Uxmal, Mayapám and Chichén. These cities made a league or alliance; and when they were busily developing their civil arts, a fourth influence broke upon Chichén with the arrival of a strange and legendary, but nevertheless credible, figure from the Toltec region in Central Mexico. This was Kukulcán: described as white-skinned, bearded (a thing unknown to the Mayas), dressed in strange garments, and leader of fierce warriors accompanying him. He is said to have come 'over the sea', which may explain why the Toltec influence is

remarked with any clarity only in Chichén. He is supposed to have arrived there about the year 1000 of our era; to have borne the insignia of the 'plumed serpent' (the Toltec emblem); to have introduced the religion of human sacrifices—though this is dubious, since there are evidences that the Mayas already practised it—and to have acted the part of a Solon, giving the New Empire an order, a legal system, and an authoritarian unity hitherto unknown.

The League of City States, something like the Achaean League in ancient Greece, seems to have taken on a new lease of life; for Uxmal and Mayapám were associated with Chichén, and at Mayapám, just before he mysteriously left Yucatán again for other lands, promising to come back some day, Kukulcán set up what seems to have been a sovereign government under the leadership of the Cocomes. He never did come back. But gradually Chichén Itzá became the most resplendent

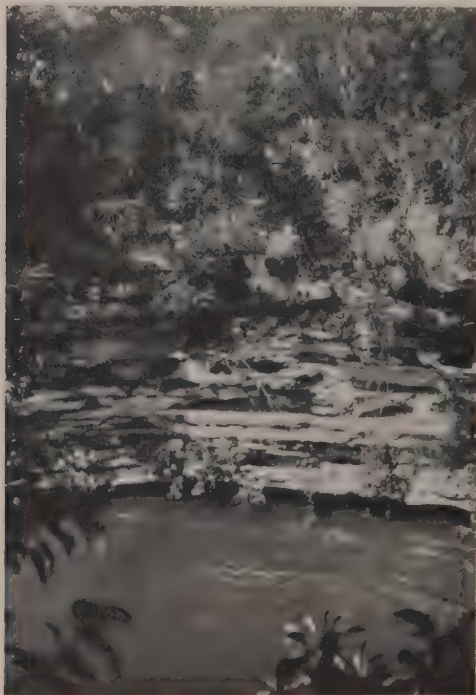


From 'Atlantic Circle', Blackie

Lady Broughton

Marble-white against a sea of jungle, the Temple of the Warriors stands out as the show-piece. Figures of warriors, priests and notables decorate the square columns along the front

city; that is, if we are to judge merely from the ruins now left to us. The 12th and 13th centuries saw its zenith. From all parts of Central America, even it is said from South America, pilgrims of non-Maya, but of course Indian, stock came regularly to witness the religious ceremonies. Among them were the Toltec human sacrifices. Though these were not as bloody as those of their successors round Mexico City, the Aztecs, they comprised the throwing of young virgins into one of the sacred cenotes, or wells, to propitiate the Maya rain-god, Yum Chac. His anger was thought responsible for the disastrous droughts afflicting the peninsula; and on his pluvial beneficence depended the Mayas' primitive agricultural existence.



Rudolf Christensen

Human sacrifice for appeasement of the gods was a Maya religious rite. The Sacred Cenote of Chichén Itzá, into which young virgins were thrown to propitiate the rain-god

It is interesting to note that the awe in which Yum Chac was held by the Mayas is paralleled by the equally terrible portrayal of the rain-god, Tlaloc, by the Toltecs and Aztecs in their sculpture. It was the rain-god who made the earth give forth her fruits; and both the Mayas and tribes of Central Mexico show his features in their sculptured friezes and façades in truly frightful guise. Yum Chac was thought to reside at the bottom of the sacred cenote, and to need a new virgin wife every year; hence the terrible sacrifices which the Toltec, Kukulcán, is said to have introduced. There is evidence in many bas-reliefs at Chichén that the Toltec cutting-out of hearts from living human beings was also practised there; for in one place three creatures—an eagle, a sloth and a jaguar—are portrayed holding a human heart in their talons. Elsewhere, a vivid fresco shows a priest ready to strike, with upraised obsidian knife.

Before we describe the buildings at Uxmal and Chichén we must bear in mind something of the religion, the economic system, and the primitive but splendid science of the Mayas. For instance, these noble ruins are only those of the public buildings, which were everywhere in ancient Mexico associated with religion. Government and civil service, science and education, were the monopoly of the priesthood; and priests even ruled the sacred games, *e.g.* the Ball Court. Accordingly, no trace is left of the many mud-huts, squalid and single-chambered, in which the masses lived; though the plan and elevation of the only stone buildings show that they copied the high roofs and walls of mud huts.

The royal rulers were priestly, ruled themselves, no doubt, by a priestly oligarchy; and as the amazingly accurate and detailed calendar, devised in the Old Empire on account of the dependence of primitive Maya agriculture on the seasons, was interpretable only by the priests,



Graham Hutton

A later development of ritual—possibly due to Toltec influence—was the tearing out of hearts from living victims: sacrifices which were represented in allegory by bas-reliefs of sacred eagles and jaguars preparing to devour the human hearts held in their talons

most of the national economy was directed by them. This we should bear in mind when looking at their marvellous semi-religious, semi-administrative stone buildings. We must also bear in mind that the whole community would labour, under fear of priests who were believed to control weather and famines, to erect edifices for the cult of the gods, whose servants the priests were on behalf of the community. Their primitive science, in the hands of these same priests, would betray artistic merit—*e.g.* in motifs, carving, sculpture, pictorial art, in the gay colours of that time, and in the very plans of the buildings—only in so far as the ideas of the artists, themselves members of the working community, did not conflict, or were not permitted to conflict, with the general religious conceptions of the oligarchic priesthood. Accordingly, when we find that, for example, the stone tracery of the façades at Uxmal cannot be precisely paralleled at Chichén, we do well to

remember that the priestly caste at Uxmal may have permitted concepts to be expressed by local masons and artists which would have been anathema at Chichén.

The great period of the New Empire's culture was already in a process of disintegration by internecine wars, famine, pestilence and exhaustion of the soil when the first conquering Spaniards arrived in the 16th century. And already (so great was the renown of the Maya cities and of their decline) the last of the Aztec emperors in Tenochtitlán (Mexico City) was contemplating the invasion and subjugation of Yucatán. From that day the Mayas have quietly slid beneath the Spanish yoke; and now only their language and their facial characteristics distinguish them from their fellow-Indian tribesmen in the other States of Mexico.

Uxmal is remarkable for the diversity of its architecture. There are a large round-cornered pyramid with a temple atop of it; a large court flanked by terraces,

behind which are chambers for priests and acolytes; a religious dwelling, known as the Nunnery, at one end of the court; and a temple, apparently of the Serpent, at the other end; some kind of public building known as the Governor's Palace, also on a pyramid or oblong hill; and various outbuildings. Here, as indeed at Chichén and Copán (Honduras), the generosity of the Carnegie Institute, the indefatigable zeal of its expert, Dr Sylvanus Morley, and the willing help of the Mexican or Honduranian Governments have combined to restore, tastefully and tactfully, the ruins so as to give an idea of their pristine magnificence.

The first feature which strikes you at Uxmal is the peculiarity of the general plan and elevation of the buildings. Pyramids we can all understand; for they lifted the temple perched on their top into the sight of the whole community, and enabled the imposing priestly processions—which, according to the richness of the Maya pantheon, must have been numerous—to wind slowly up to the altars, while excitement also mounted with them. What is more strange is the flatness of everything; the bigness outside, the narrow and low rooms inside; the long façades; the ornate friezes topping the walls; the small doorways; the lack of windows (for which doorways, without doors, served); the representations of the faces, or rather masks, of gods and goddesses along the friezes; and the surprising massiveness of construction, necessitated by the lack of scientific knowledge of thrusts, strains and stresses. A people whose priests could calculate the advent of equinoxes, solstices, eclipses, etc., was unable to discover the wheel, the use of metal, the principle of the true arch, and the economy of weight in a building.

Unable to utilize a rounded arch with a locking keystone dividing the strain equally, the Mayas resorted to a most unwieldy device. Upon massive vertical walls or doorways they superimposed a

tapering inverted V of stone, not quite meeting at the top. Then, across the gap, exerting a disproportionate strain on the inward-slanting sides, were placed flat stone slabs. Continued in series, these V-shaped 'arches' formed vaults, constituting the only kind of roof that the Mayas knew how to build. On this principle, it was impossible to construct any chamber wider than about six yards; for if it were wider, the walls would have had to be carried up so high, and built so thick, that they would have collapsed before ever they bore the strain of a vault. Moreover, when the chambers were placed side by side, the gaps between the inverted V's had to be filled up; and into them, adding to the general strain, the Mayas piled masses of solid rubble.

The net effect was, naturally, that stresses developed half-way down the inverted V vaults, or else immediately under the roofing slabs at the peak. Then the vaults, pushed by the weight of rubble on either side of them, fell in. Thus it is that the straight walls and façades are left in their glory; but the inner chambers and roofs are destroyed. Tropical rain seeped in through the loosely mortised stone slabs (only stucco of an inferior and primitive kind was plastered on the surfaces, and then painted in gay colours), and the rubble disintegrated. The size of the façade, wall and roofing slabs is amazing; but the primitiveness of the roofing technique, and the consequently restricted living-space inside the great buildings, amazes one even more in a people whose other attainments were so precociously mature.

On the façade of the Nunnery at Uxmal can still be seen the corner-motifs, facing outward at 45 degrees, of the three superimposed evil faces of the supposed Rain God. The noses are over-stylized, making the impression of raised elephant trunks—which may explain why the early Spaniards called such buildings the temples of the Elephant God, and why



Catherine MacKay



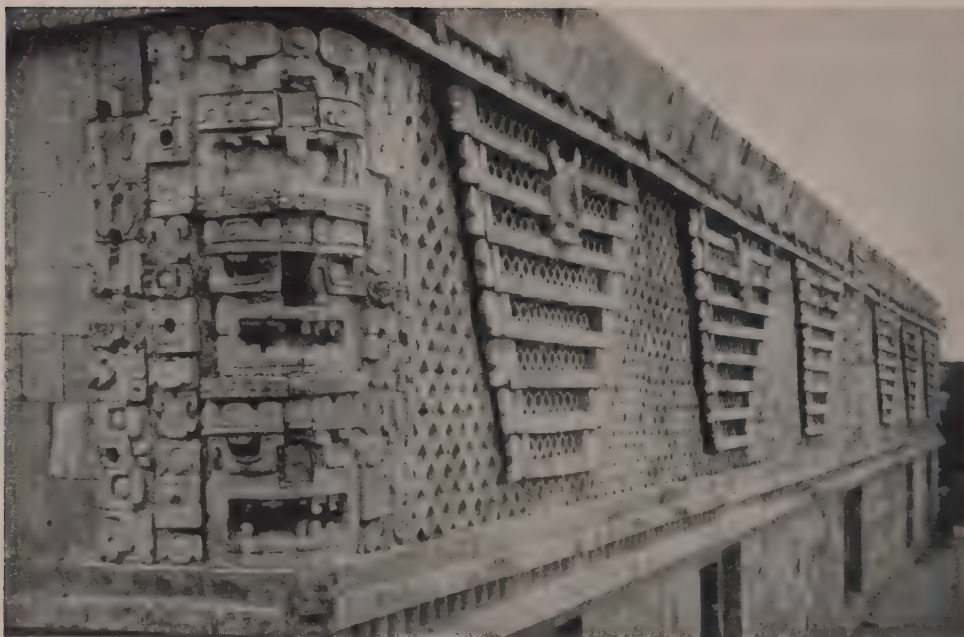
Graham Hutton

The principle of the true arch was unknown to Maya architects, whose inverted V-shaped vaults, topped with flat stone slabs, could only span a narrow chamber (left) and easily collapsed (right)

many scholars spent years in disputing how the Mayas ever came to have the idea of an elephant, never known on the American Continent! An outer cornice runs along the level of the top of the inner walls, before the slanting vaults begin; and above it rises a frieze to a height as great as that of the walls from earth level, this being the height of the roofing-slabs over the peak of the vaults inside the building. Along the frieze are formal inverted pyramidal patterns of serpents, beginning with a short serpent at the cornice level and rising to the longest at the topmost level. These occur at formally regular intervals; and the background is filled, along the entire façade of the Nunnery, with a severe stone tracery formed by interlacing diagonal lines. In the centre are again three superimposed Rain-God masks, over the principal door, slightly bigger than two other doors on

either side. You must realize that all is in whitish stone under a tropical sun and sky; that every motif is composed of many separate carved stones pieced together; and that no mortar or metal instruments were used.

The other buildings at Uxmal show the same formal severity—all except the temple at the end of the great courtyard facing the Nunnery. Here, however, perhaps because it was the Serpent Temple served by the priests and nuns of the surrounding dwellings (of which the Nunnery was one) we find a breakaway from formality. Across a façade fundamentally as formal as any other at Uxmal, huge serpents twine their sprawling way up and across and round the formal patterns, their mouths open, and their tails twisted round each other. In one place, a babyish figure, seated with knees pointing outwards like a Virgin over a cathedral portal, is to be seen among



Graham Hutton

Formalism is the keynote of the Uxmal decorative style. The long façade of the Nunnery carries inverted pyramidal patterns of formalized serpents on a severe background of diagonal stone tracery. At each of the corners are superimposed three evil faces of the rain-god, with his trunk-like nose

Graham Hutton





Graham Hartman

Exceptional at Uxmal are the huge serpents twining across the patterned frieze of one temple above. In contrast with this formality, the façade of the Nunnery at Chichén Itzá (below) is lavishly complicated. A symbolic figure above the portal recalls those found over Romanesque church doors in Europe

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The Ball Court at Chichén Itzá, looking towards the Royal Box. On the walls may be seen the rings through which the ball was struck. Bas-reliefs (p. 249) decorate the lower walls

triangular and square patterns, terrible masks of deities, and over-complicated friezes and cornices.

The Governor's Palace, the most massive structure at Uxmal, is on a considerable artificial pyramidal mound. (Here, while I was assiduously taking photographs, my eyes were nearly pecked out by a savage kite, or buzzard, with wings measuring fully six feet across, whose nest in the ruins I had unwittingly disturbed. Like the spider, she had made herself nests in Kings' Palaces.) There were clear differences of ornamentation in the façades and friezes of this Palace; but the main impression at Uxmal, one of rigorous formality associated with an earlier and indigenous culture, persisted throughout. There is little sense of non-Maya influences. It seemed to me to have been a very traditional, perhaps authoritarian, but certainly a static, unfertilized kind of society. On the other hand, it shows little (at least today) of the complicated kind of Maya decoration observable in the Old Empire.

At Chichén Itzá all is different. In the first place, the site is enormous, and the ruins have been cleared and restored. In the heart of a flat plain covered with rolling jungle rise vaster pyramids, vaster temples, more perfect colonnades, more ample courtyards, covering many square miles of land. You cannot plunge from the beaten tracks joining building to building without stumbling over stone serpents, broken pillars, caryatides supporting solitary stone slabs, rubble from the interior of a collapsed pyramid, pavements, water-conduits, broken bas-reliefs fallen from vanished temple façades, and the like. The principal buildings—the Temple of the Warriors, the Temple of Kukulcán on its enormous pyramid, the Nunnery (for there is one here too), the Fertility Temple, the Temple of the Jaguars at one end of the vast Ball Court, the King's Box at the far end, and the Observatory—all these are either restored as can best be done with the fallen materials, or in process of being pieced together.

The effect under blazing January sun-

shine was striking; for the stone is whiter than at Uxmal, and the dimensions of everything, from site to individual buildings, are more grandly imposing. Moreover here, for unknown reasons, the buildings have not fallen in so much; consequently inside—and even here and there outside—one can still see the perfectly coloured pillars, frescoes and bas-reliefs as they once appeared, with the stucco which covered everything.

The outstanding feature of Chichén is the extraordinary complication of the decorative arts and crafts. Detail is all-important; the general effect not so much. While, of course, the main elevations, plans, and structural details are the same as at Uxmal, the decoration is infinitely more complex. So complex is it that, whether you look at a solitary bas-relief on a single slab, a single fresco of a warrior on one side of the square columns forming the famous colonnade running round the

front and one side of the Temple of the Warriors, a motif in a complex frieze running round a building at eave-level, or the mask of a god, you will be struck with the likeness to the over-complicated, almost horrifyingly intricate and crowded decorations of temples in Southern India or Ceylon. Look, for example, next time you are in the British Museum at the casts of the decorations of the Amaravati Tope on the ground floor; then go up to the little Mexican room and compare the Toltec or Old Maya Empire's art with the exhibits from Chichén. You will at once notice the similarity between the Chichén art and that of old India; the comparative severity and formality of Toltec or Old Maya or Uxmal decoration, most like the classic quality of unbending Egyptian art. It is noteworthy that one of the most pleasing buildings in Chichén is the scientific laboratory, the so-called Observatory: its shape necessary circular with



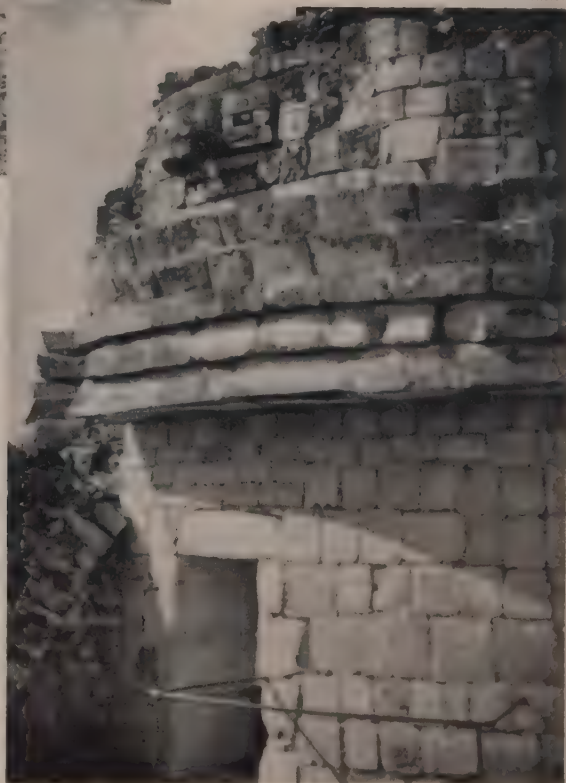
Graham Hutton

The Ball Court and its enclosure, showing the back of the towering Temple of the Jaguars. To the left is the supposed 'Notables' Box', from which the picture opposite was taken



Graham Hutton

A side wall of the Sanctuary surmounting the Temple of the Warriors. Between groups of superimposed rain-god masks, placed at the corners and half-way along the wall, occur the motifs of a human head in the jaws of a serpent, surrounded by a bas-relief of plumes (see third Photographure Plate)



Graham Hutton

The architectural simplicity of the side wall shown above is found again in the only surviving example at Chichén Itzá of a round tower—the Observatory, severely functional in design. The Mayas could build symmetrically in the round, despite their inability to shape stones to exactly symmetrical sizes



Graham Hutton

Along the lower walls of the Ball Court, the members of opposing teams face each other. Here are three, accoutred for the fray with plumed helmets, nose-sticks and embossed girdles

little windows at angles to catch sun, moon and planets on certain days or nights, and its design severely functional, even in the cornice running round it.

On the other hand, in the bas-reliefs running along the friezes of the Temple of the Warriors, in the horrible façade of the Nunnery at Chichén with its Rain God masks and symbolic figure over the portal (astonishingly like a Virgin, or *majestas domini*, in the tympanum of a Romanesque church in Provence), in the bas-reliefs along the sloping stone boundaries of the Ball Court (with their blood-curdling portrayal of the beheading of the captain of the losing side in this semi-religious game of prowess), in other bas-reliefs showing the ritual and life of the State, you feel that here the artists faithfully reflected the social and religious strains and stresses

of an infinitely more energetic, if more neurotic and more explosive, society.

There are delightful exceptions: the exquisite jaguars, of which one has lately been discovered inlaid with precious stones; the classic lines of the Temple of the Jaguars, its portal formed by severe serpents standing on their heads while their tails uplift the roof; the rigid lines of the ascending 'landings' (or levels) of the pyramids on which the temples are reared. These are the big, fundamental similarities in Maya art. When the frequent religious ceremonies took place, the masses from their squalid huts could not be expected to perceive the delicate complexity of the bas-reliefs. They were enabled only to witness the slow procession of priests and warriors and victims, decked in gaudy colours and in Quetzal plumes,

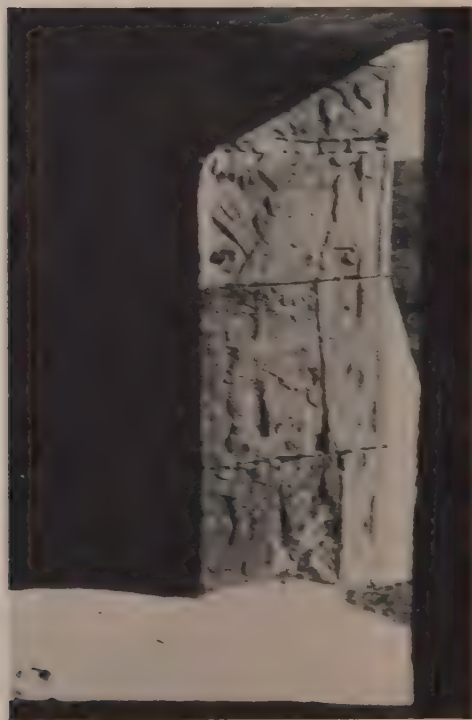
as it wound round each pyramid's 'landings', up one side and round to the steps on another side facing another point of the compass, and so on to the temples or altars on the top. But the priests, novices, warriors, nobles, artists, 'intellectuals'—these were admitted by the priestly oligarchy to see, at close approach, the awful delineations of gods and goddesses on the friezes and pillars and portals, the bas-reliefs that told the story of the nation, the rituals that justified the ways of God to man.

So it is that, in those holy recesses, those inner temples, those courts and colonnades, you can now see the sacred creatures holding human hearts in their talons; the warrior-caste setting forth in its bravery of mien and costume and

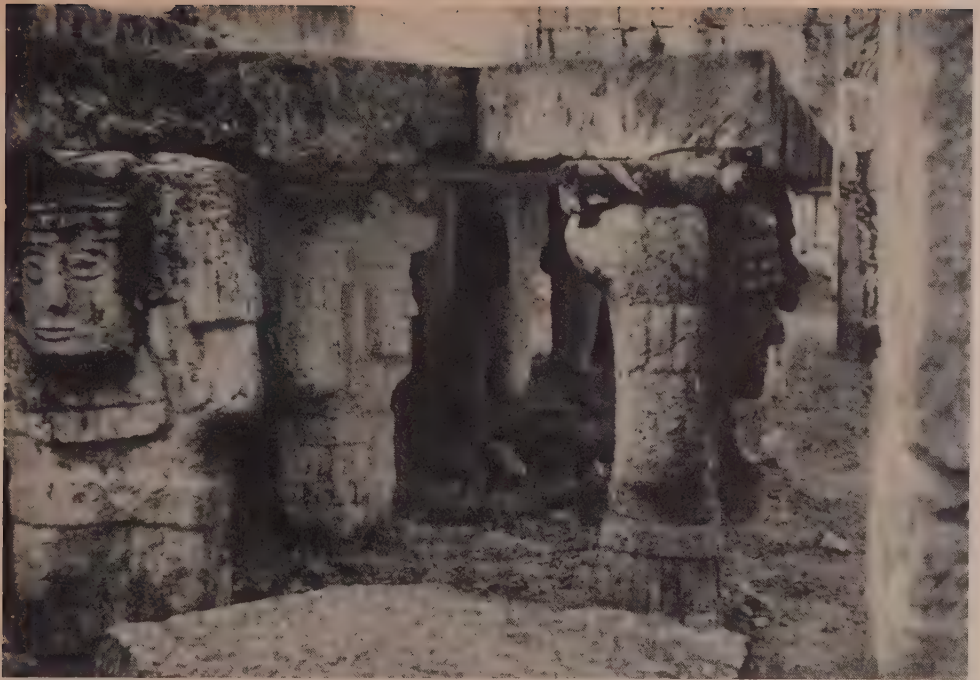
armament, to slaughter enemies or bring them back for sacrifice; the teams lining up for that ball-game which so resembled our 'fives', the Basques' *pelota*, or modern American basket-ball, in which the Maya athletes had to strike the ball with their elbows through their opponents' stone ring, fixed high on the long straight wall on the other side of the court; the terribly tortuous sacred serpents, twining mysteriously, and without any observable sense of pattern, round scenes of war or peace, their hieroglyphic speech issuing from their open jaws; the queer scattered calendrical signs, like a runaway Zodiac, all over the scenes; the top-heavy accoutrement of priests, kings and warriors.

The only thing one does not find—I did not see it at Chichén or Uxmal—is the portrayal of the common folk, the agriculturist, the potter, the tailor, the stonemason who reared these awe-inspiring edifices. The nearest you can get to that is, here and there, a glimpse of a sacrificial victim, clad differently from his Maya captors; or beautifully sympathetic studies in stone and in frescoes of jaguars and birds and fish. One thing I shall not forget: in one of the notables' 'boxes' round the Ball Court there was a large wall covered with red-ochre frescoes; and there you can see a mother giving birth to a child, already stretching out her arms for the little new-born creature. Among the galaxy of fearsomely ornate gods and goddesses, half human and half bestial, there is something pathetic about this rare appeal to something so commonly human.

In the temple of Kukulcán on top of the pyramid (wrongly called the Citadel) and on one jamb of the main portal facing the strong sunlight, there is a unique bas-relief: that of bearded Kukulcán himself. Inside that temple, worming your way down passages into the very core of the pyramid which existed before Kukulcán arrived from 'over the sea', you emerge in an inner chamber where the varied colours of frescoes still remain on a great



The supposed effigy of Kukulcán on the jamb of a door in the temple named after him. His painted beard may be discerned



Graham Hutton

Raul Camara

The sacrificial altar in the Sanctuary of the Temple of the Warriors, borne by supporting caryatides on uplifted palms. 'Their faces, their very noses, are different, so realistic was that particular sculptor'



The latest discovery at Chichén Itzá: deep within the pyramid crowned by the temple of Kukulcán, archaeologists have found a chamber containing a jaguar throne of stone. Its eyes and the 75 discs indicating its spots are made of apple-green jade

column, and where a black stone jaguar gleams at you in the bizarre electric lamps, jade-eyed, quizzing you sideways.

Or again, if you climb the broad steps to the Temple of the Warriors, above its noble lines of columns in the colonnade below (where on each column are depicted in many colours the heroes of the Mayas), and pass between the up-ended serpents, you come to a low flat altar. It may have been the sacrificial stone. It is supported by many caryatides carved solidly from stone and bearing this altar on uplifted palms. Their faces, their very noses, are different, so realistic was that particular sculptor. Coming out you will see one of the commonest features of Maya art; a Chac Mool, or reclining human figure in stone lying bent back on its elbows and with both its knees upraised and feet together. What strikes you is that the face is turned towards you, at right angles to the body. Some say these formed a priest's chair, the priest sitting in the declivity made by the belly. Others say they were sacrificial altars, the victim's heart being torn out by the priest's obsidian knife and his very hands. Certainly nothing is quite so startling in all Maya cities as the Chac Mool when you come upon one suddenly, to find him easily reclining and staring abruptly sideways at your approach!

While here and there—for instance, in the beautiful classic formality of the motifs round the open-jawed serpents' heads, a human head in their mouths, along the walls of the Temple of the Warriors—you can experience the thrill of pleasure at recognizing some trace of 'art for art's sake', some hint of an artist's having worked for the wholeness of the thing he was trying to build into unity, you will come away from Chichén as I left it: immeasurably impressed; but equally oppressed by the deadweight of intricate formality under which the Maya people must have suffered. I seemed to see

them, especially when I walked among these bone-white ruins under a tropic moon, quite enmeshed in the barren ritual with which their priests must have terrorized them into public service. At night, the very stones cry aloud for the blood that was spilled in creating, consecrating and reconsecrating them. Take one look at the photographs in this article. Ask yourself: were this people religion-ridden in an inward sense, or did practitioners of religiosity run amok among them?

Whatever may be the answers to this and many another puzzling question, they now lie beyond conjecture. We only know that these Mayas were imposing builders, the most exact astronomers known to their world, and a people with a caste-system as intricate as their religion. They gave up beauty of mass and line for detail and outward show. Their States were authoritarian theocracies, as brutal in war as in peace, providing scarcely a single trace in their surviving works of any feeling for the aspirations, the desires, the self-expression of the individual spirit of man. That is, perhaps, why 'the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome', though the Greeks and Romans perished before more barbarian peoples, communicated itself to the barbarians themselves, and eventually vanquished them peaceably. Not so the Maya civilization. Before the Spaniards landed in Yucatán it had split and crumbled; as had the inner vaults which their architecture, devised only to prop up great frontages, could never properly span. Now in the twisted jungle you can find beautiful and fearful things which these people, this civilization, made. But they are almost buried in rubble. Their great temples and noble buildings were imposing façades, whited sepulchres, behind which lay mountains of rubble. Their priestly rulers thought neither of rubble nor rabble; and, in the end, it was the rubble that won.



Raul Cama

A doorway of the Governor's Palace at Uxmal: a 'Maya arch' in its setting of rain-god masks



Wolfgang von Hagen

Naturalism in the art of the Old Maya Empire: the head of a figure in the Western Court at Copan



R. N. Wagoner

Classic formalism in the New Empire: an elaboration of the 'plumed serpent' motif at Chichén Itzá



R. A. Wagner

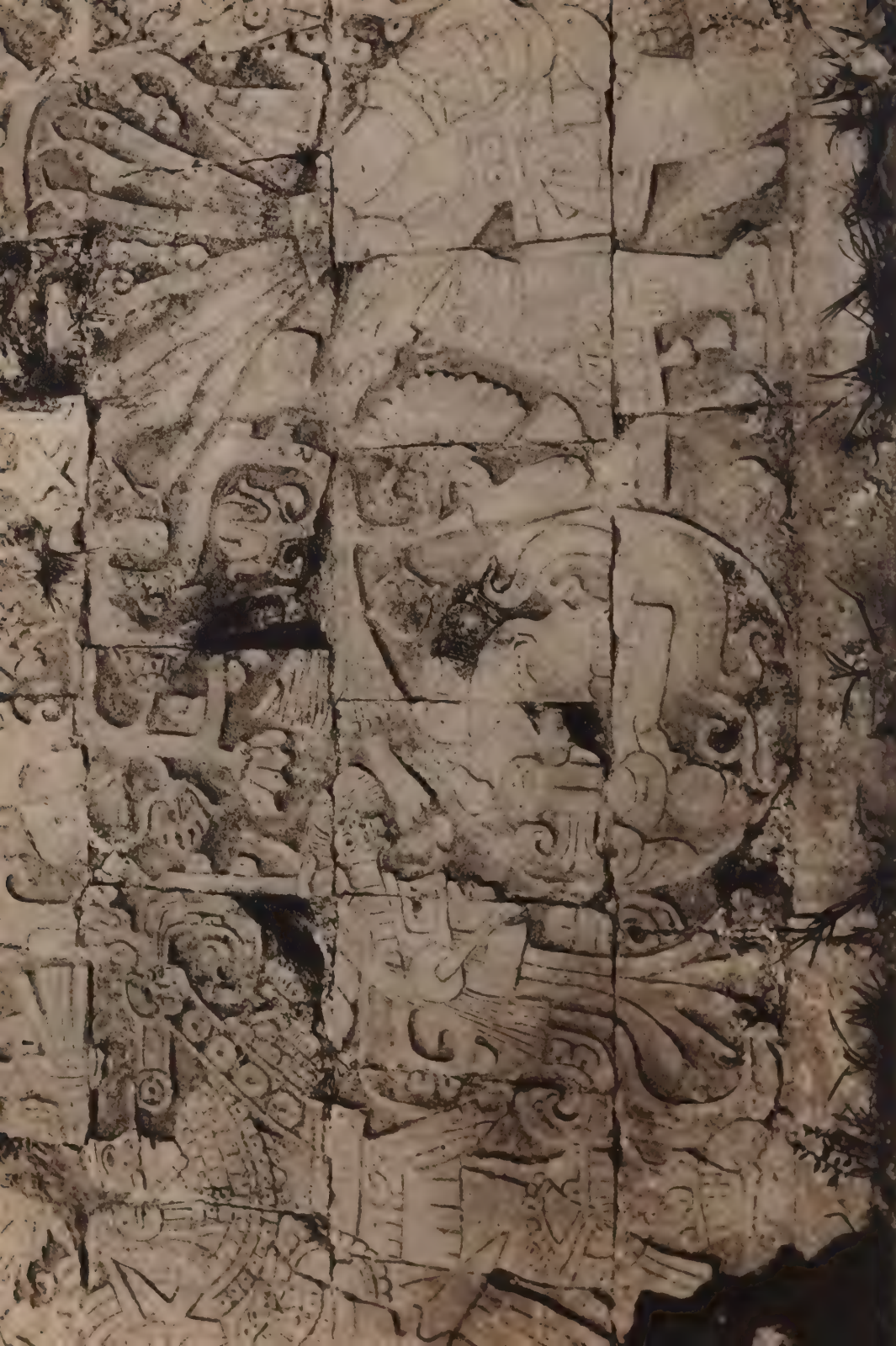
Plumed serpents with uplifted tails frame the sanctuary entrance in the Temple of the Warriors



From 'Atlantic Circle,' Blackie

Lady Broug

In front of the same portal a Chac Mool startles the oncomer with his grim, sidelong challenge



From 'Atlantic Circle,' *Blackie*

In the Ball Court, Chichén Itzá.

The winning captain (left), obsidian knife in hand, has decapitated the losing captain (right), whose head,

Lady Broughton





Yucatán and the Mayas Today

by HELGA LARSEN

'And what happened afterwards?' When all the pomp of a great Empire, fabric of a thousand years, has vanished owing to some defect in its social or economic organization, the simple peasant still survives and tills the soil. So it is with the Mayas; and, since there are as good fish in the biological sea as ever came out of it, perhaps one day they may again display their gifts in some new phase of American civilization

YUCATÁN has changed very little since the Spanish conquerors arrived more than four hundred years ago to find its ancient civilization already in a state of collapse.

Indeed, flying over the flat, featureless country, one marvels that at any time in its history it should have encouraged and supported a great Empire. The face of the land is hidden by dense forest; there are no streams or rivers; the soil is parched and shallow, covering a coralline limestone. But thousands of years of erosion have broken through the earth's crust, exposing the subterranean water level and forming deep natural wells, known as *cenotes*. The level of the *cenotes* is always the same, but their depth varies according to the elevation of the land; they are only a few feet deep near the coast, while in the interior their depth is almost a hundred feet. These wells are scattered throughout Yucatán and, with the few existing lakes, they have made life possible for man and beast.

One would think that the meagre resources of a land dependent on this precarious water supply would have stayed the hand of the most ardent empire-builder. They were, however, sufficient to attract not only the Mayas of old but also the Spaniards, at a fairly early date in their conquest of Central America. The Spaniards founded in the peninsula the only two cities worthy of mention today—Mérida, capital of the state of Yucatán, and Campeche, capital of the state of that name. The latter, built in 1540, was the first European settlement. It is rich in the memories of a stormy past, of the days when pirates

harried the Spanish Main. Fragments of the old wall which formerly surrounded it are still standing, and they invest this sleepy colonial port with an air of aged splendour.

On the ruins of the ancient Indian site T'Ho, the 'very loyal and noble city of Mérida' was founded in 1542 by Don Francisco de Montejo, then Governor and Captain-General of Yucatán. He and his famous father, also named Francisco de Montejo, had conquered the land for God and the King of Castile. Even today the narrow streets and stately churches of this picturesque city bear witness to the rule of Spain. Simple houses, pale blue or rose pink—some of them rich in antique Spanish treasures, for several of Mérida's families can proudly trace their lineage direct to the conquerors themselves—turn their backs upon the streets in the good old Spanish-Moorish fashion. Barred windows and iron-studded doors give them a mysterious, austere look; but once inside the courtyards, around which all the old houses in Mérida are built, brilliant tropical flowers and splashing fountains soon make one forget the iron bars and frowning walls.

Three of the lofty gateways, formerly entrances to Mérida, are still intact, and they make the ancient city unique in the whole of Mexico. Yet even in this remote spot modern influences are in some measure apparent. New houses have supplanted and surrounded the old; many of the cobbled streets have disappeared; the practice of naming streets by figures of animals or birds perched on the houses has been dropped in favour of plain and

practical numbers. Only a few of the old figures have managed to survive the ravages of time, and these can still be seen poised on some of the house-tops.

Until recently the whole peninsula of Yucatán could be reached only by water and was almost isolated from the rest of the Mexican Republic, because the dense forests and treacherous swamps along its southern boundaries made access by land impossible. But now a daily passenger and mail-plane service connects Campeche and Mérida with Mexico City; a weekly plane from Miami brings the United States within half a day's distance; and two steamship lines from New York and New Orleans call regularly at Progreso, the port north of Mérida. Communications, too, have been improved during

the last decade by the building of roads. Distances which in former years meant several days of weary travelling on horseback can now be covered in a few hours.

Thus is progress coming gradually to Yucatán. Upon the Indians, however, its effect is as yet imperceptible; they seem, in fact, hardly to be aware of the changing times at all.

In Mérida the streets and plazas are thronged with white-clad, silent Mayas, whose features bear the unmistakable stamp of the sculptures on their ancient ruins. Maize is their staple food, as it has always been; and it is probable that their methods of cultivation have scarcely altered during the last two thousand years.

At the end of the rainy season land is cleared by felling the bush, which is burned, when sufficiently dry, in March or April. As soon as the rains start again, corn is sown by the simple method of digging holes with a planting-stick at regular intervals and dropping a few grains into each. After two or three successive crops, which diminish greatly with each planting, new land must be cleared and the old field left fallow for about seven years, until it is again covered with forest. When the forest has been burned too much, coarse grass springs up in its place, and at that point the land becomes useless for agriculture. When one considers that the population of many of the ancient cities probably exceeded one hundred thousand (judging from the archaeological remains), it seems reasonable to suppose that hunger was the chief enemy which drove the ancient Mayas from their homes in search of new colonies.

At the very gates of Mérida the country disintegrates into miles of *henequén* fields with row upon row of grey-green agave plants thrusting their sword-like leaves into the air, thriving amazingly upon the stony, arid soil. For almost a century Yucatán drew its living from the production of *henequén*, whose coarse, strong fibre is twisted into sisal rope used for binder



Karl Ruppert

Most of the house-top figures which were used to name the streets of ancient Mérida have now succumbed to the ravages of time



E. Nerby

Market day in Mérida is a busy moment for the Mayas. This man shows skilful persuasion in driving his harnessed team of pigs; his son, less practised, rests on the kerbstone

twine. This industry, which employed thousands of Indian workmen, once brought untold wealth to the peninsula and the *hacendados*, or landed aristocracy, amassed great fortunes. The slump which followed the World War, combined with rising competition and, last but not least, political intrigues, practically ruined what was an inexhaustible source of prosperity. President Cardenas, while on a recent visit to Yucatán, expropriated most of the large henequén estates and subdivided the land among the Indian peons, in accordance with the agrarian programme carried out by his government.

The bulk of the population of Yucatán, however, which is overwhelmingly Indian, does not now depend upon henequén for its livelihood. Neither is it found in the

cities or towns, but in the villages which are scattered through the bush.

The town differs from the village in that the population of the former is of mixed blood, and contains groups of merchants and traders, among whom class distinction is apparent in dress and customs. The village, on the other hand, is Indian, and agriculture is the only means of support. There are no class or economic differences and all peasants have Maya surnames. While the town is always laid out in European fashion, with streets and plazas, the village consists of a group of huts scattered irregularly and without symmetry around the always present cenote. Maya is the universal language throughout the villages. If an Indian knows Spanish, he never speaks it among his own people.



Ola Apenes

Maize is still the Maya's staple crop, and his methods of cultivation have scarcely changed for 2000 years. At the end of the rainy season the land is cleared of bush—

Ola Apenes



—and sowing takes place when the rains start again. It is a simple process; with his planting-stick the Maya digs holes at regular intervals, dropping the seed as he goes from a bag slung across his shoulders



Ruth Carolus

Pottery made without a wheel recalls the ancient Mayas' lack of that invention. With his hands the Maya potter shapes the vessel while his feet turn the block on which it rests

The Maya Indian is little more than five feet tall, well-proportioned, with small hands and feet, a large aquiline nose, sloping forehead, straight black hair and a skin of warm, golden-brown colour. He dresses in knee-length, white cotton trousers, a white shirt, if he wears one at all, a white apron-skirt tied around the waist, and heavily roped sandals. The woman's costume consists of a white cotton petticoat and a long, loose smock or *huipil*, beautifully embroidered around the neck and hem. The Mayas are exceedingly clean and fastidious people. They bathe and change their clothes every day of the year, even when they are ill.

A Maya household is a simple affair. The hut, oval in shape and measuring about ten feet by twenty, is built of poles driven into the ground; these are sometimes interwoven with horizontal, pli-

able sticks, and sometimes daubed and plastered with mud. There are no windows, but two doors of woven withies are placed opposite one another in the long walls of the hut. The steeply pitched roof is thatched with palm-leaves or grass.

Blocks of wood, five or six inches high, serve as chairs. The furniture consists of a low, round table, on which are made the *tortillas*, the maize griddle cakes used instead of bread throughout Indian Mexico; a square table at which to eat; a few boxes for keeping clothes and trinkets; a number of woven, circular nets suspended from the beams for protecting food from mice; calabashes of various sizes and shapes and a few large earthenware jars for holding water. Hammocks of henequén fibre (the only bed known in the peninsula) are swung over the rafters during the day. When lowered at night



E. Naylor

Raul Camara



The Maya's dwelling consists of poles interwoven with pliable sticks or plastered with mud, and a steeply pitched roof thatched with palm-leaves. The kitchen lean-to stands apart from the hut

From their ancestors, who had no beasts of burden, the Mayas have inherited remarkable carrying powers. A band across the forehead called a macapal takes the weight of the load, in this case of fresh palm-leaves for thatching



Raul Camara

Bodil Christensen

Despite their primitive surroundings, the Mayas are meticulously clean and make the most of limited culinary resources, preparing their maize with black beans, chili pepper, tomatoes, etc.



Centre of every village is the cenote, or well, penetrating through the lime-stone crust of Yucatán to the subterranean water-level. On these wells, scattered throughout the country, life depends today as in the Imperial past



A Maya bas-relief from an Old Empire site at Yaxchilan in the province of Chiapas. Note the strong resemblance between the features of the upright figure—

Helga Larsen



—and those of this modern Maya woman. She wears the characteristic white petticoat and smock, the latter embroidered with exquisite skill around the neck and hem

they hang so close together that the hut looks like a gigantic cobweb.

The activities of the house centre round the primitive hearth of three stones placed on the stamped earth floor of the lean-to which serves as kitchen. Cooking utensils consist of clay pots, a disc for baking tortillas, perhaps an iron kettle for melting fat and a stone for grinding maize, though an up-to-date meat grinder is more often seen nowadays.

Maize and its cultivation is the whole life of every Maya village. Maize in a variety of forms—mixed with black beans, chili pepper, squash, tomatoes and other vegetables and fruits—constitutes the daily diet of the Maya. Flesh and fowl are eaten on festive occasions. Honey takes the place of sugar, for most of the Indians keep bees.

The Maya is a keen hunter; deer, peccary, armadillo and tapir abound in the forests; and often the greater part of the village joins in the chase. Birds are taken in snares. The wild turkey, king of all the birds in Yucatán, with a plumage as brilliant as a peacock's, is very plentiful; when roasted in the ground he makes a delicious meal.

Professedly the Mayas are Catholics; but their religion, even in the most progressive villages, is strongly affected by the faith of their ancestors. Ancient ceremonies, connected mostly with agriculture, have survived to this day, though they are sadly changed and degenerated. Many of the old gods still concern the Maya deeply and seem nearer to his daily life than the Catholic saints, because they rule over Nature and are the guardians of the cornfields, the village, the house, the beehive, the animals and the forest. These gods are also the keepers of the winds and the rains.

A medicine-man or *h'men* as he is called in Maya, is in charge of all ceremonies connected with this nature worship, which are celebrated by raising an altar of freshly cut branches in the forest or near

(but never inside) the house. On this altar are placed the sacred offerings: bread baked in an oven in the ground, intoxicating wine brewed from bark of the *balché* tree, honey and other foods. The *h'men* conducts the ceremony; in his prayers and incantations the names of ancient deities and Catholic saints are strangely confused.

A *h'men* is a person of very special, professional knowledge, who has 'graduated' after years of training. Often the office passes from father to son. Most of these *h'mens* are also herbalists, possessing a deep understanding of the medicinal properties of various plants. They never take part in any ceremony connected with the Catholic church and are considered by the other Indians as mysterious, uncanny beings to be treated with mingled respect and fear. By twirling a crystal pebble or *zaztun* ('stone of light') in front of the fire, they read the will of the gods. It is hardly surprising that witchcraft is often attributed to them.

In the south-eastern part of the territory of Quintana Roo a small group of independent Indians have managed to survive. Racially they are very similar to other Mayas; they have as yet no schools, no military, federal or municipal authorities; they are unfriendly to strangers, they speak no Spanish and do not consider themselves part of the Mexican Republic, although they are quite well-disposed towards British Honduras. They rule themselves according to their own tribal organization. Their sole industry, except the usual cultivation of corn, is *chicle*, which is, indeed, the second largest industry in the peninsula. Chicle is obtained from the sap of the *sapodilla* tree; when boiled it becomes hard, and it forms the basis of our modern chewing-gum.

These Mayas are the descendants of the so-called *sublevados*, the rebels, who took part in the war of the castes in 1847. This was the largest Indian uprising since the conquest. After centuries of smoulder-



The Mayas of today scarcely remember the glories of their ancient civilization. Yet, as the work of these youthful architects shows, the instinct to build in stone is still latent in them

ing hate against oppression and exploitation by the whites, the rebellion flared up in the east and south of Quintana Roo. Soon the whole peninsula, with the exception of Mérida, was in the hands of the Indians, who were helped with arms and ammunition from British Honduras. Towns and villages were burned and sacked. There were horrible and wholesale massacres. Thus was settled the age-old account between oppressor and oppressed, and generations of suffering and injustice were avenged.

Finally Mérida, on the verge of surrender, was saved as if by a miracle. The rainy season was approaching and the ancient urge to plant the land proved too strong for the Mayas. Gradually the insurgent army dissolved as the Indians, obeying a primeval instinct, returned to their fields. Soon the peninsula was again

in the hands of the whites and the war of the castes burned itself out in the grey ashes of defeat, though an undying hate was kept alive in the hearts of the sublevados in Quintana Roo.

At the present moment the local government of Quintana Roo is doing its utmost to incorporate these few independent villages into the general social scheme of the Mexican Republic. Promises of land grants have been made to the Indians and, as a friendly gesture, the governor himself has recently visited several isolated hamlets in the hope of persuading the inhabitants to allow schools to be built so that Spanish may be taught.

When that has been accomplished the people of Yucatán will be united for the first time in history. It is to be hoped that the march of progress will lead them to a future not less brilliant than their past.

The Recluse of the Pacific

Paul Gauguin's Life in Tahiti and the Marquesas

by RENÉE HAMON

The banks of the Stour (see The Geographical Magazine for October 1937) have this in common with the shores of Tahiti: that they nourished the art of a great painter. The Pacific Isles were a specially favourable environment for Gauguin, with his passionate hatred of 'whimpering civilization' and his urgent need to express his creative vision in fresh form and colour, uncontaminated by extraneous influences. The following article was translated from the French by M. Félix Rose

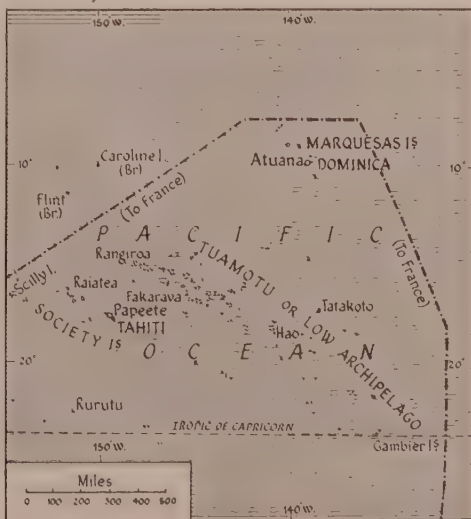
WHEN a man sets out to attain that elusive goal which is the perfection of his particular art, he needs, besides his own courage and determination, the love and companionship of a woman. It is the stimulus that moves and inspires his efforts. Robert Louis Stevenson, for instance, had the devoted help of his energetic Fanny, so lovable in her rough tenderness. Jack London found comfort in his faithful Charmian. But there was no one to whom Paul Gauguin could turn.

True, he had a wife—the fair-haired Mette, a dignified woman who thought she had married a typical stockbroker and not an artist, a whimsical fellow with long hair and clothes quaintly cut. In temperament the two were hopelessly unlike. Yet in a way Gauguin loved her. When first he lived in the South Seas, he wrote to her by every mail, telling her at length of the hopes which lay deep within him. It was a new and a difficult life for him. It took him a year to settle down to the strange tropical scenery, so varied, so capricious, so loth to divulge its secrets. And then, just as he was coming to understand his surroundings, the haughty Mette ordered him to return.

He had gone to the South Seas because he was tired and listless, because he hoped to find new ecstasies, to realize new dreams. And perhaps there were stronger reasons for his going, reasons expressed by August Strindberg when he wrote to the painter that he was: 'Gauguin, the savage, who hates a whimpering civilization, a sort of Titan who, jealous of the Creator, makes

in his leisure hours his own little creation, the child who takes his toys to pieces so as to make others from them, who abjures and defies, preferring to see the heavens red rather than blue with the crowd. . . .'

All through his first voluntary exile the Titan who hated a whimpering civilization never consciously felt his loneliness. He felt only that he must work, that he had no time to lose. Then he was recalled to France. And when he came back for the second time to settle in the South Seas, he came as a man disheartened and misunderstood. Mette had abandoned him. His daughter, the 'White Aline', died; his own illness grew worse; he realized all at once how oppressive was the weird solitude in which he lived. And he had no one to stand by him.





Rende Hamon

The Tahitian climate alternates between brilliant sunshine and heavy, pitiless rain; its effect upon Gauguin was to raise him to heights of inspiration and plunge him to depths of melancholy

He lived alone with Nature and with God—alone with 'everybody's angels', the primitive, chattering *vahinés*. All the same, he loved the Tahitian women for the beauty he found in them; he loved their horizontal shoulders, their slender hips, their foreheads arched like those of the Italian madonnas, their golden skins, oblique eyes and smooth hair. But what were they thinking of? Nothing.

One must have lived there to realize how sullen, how distressing these ever-melancholy isles can be, how desperately sad they are when the cruel, heavy rain drowns the palm-groves and darkens the whole earth itself. The tropical dampness pervades the hut; the coconut-matting is clammy to the touch; the *pareu* hangs limply and the roof thatched with coconut-leaves gives off a musty smell. The guitar-strings snap; there is no more music, nothing to break the silence, the maddening, stifling silence.

It was at such a time that the lonely exile wrote from his retreat in the Marquesas: 'We have exhausted all that words can convey and have taken refuge in silence. I look at the flowers, like us motionless. I listen to the cry of great birds hovering in space and I understand the Great Truth.'

GAUGUIN'S WORK DESTROYED

In the Marquesas the natives still praise the memory of the good 'Koké'. At Tahiti, however, the whites waste no tenderness on him. They have burned what today they would have admired. The bright canvases, the wood-engravings and the sculptures—they have burned them all in the undergrowth. What a glorious bonfire! Because they have reduced to ashes all that once lay within their grasp, and because they now realize the value of what they have destroyed, the whites are

full of hate and resentment. They shamelessly sully the memory of the man of genius. "He was eaten-up with leprosy", they say, "and his legs were swollen with *fifé* (elephantiasis). He got drunk with the vahinés and he took morphia."

Gauguin drank nothing but a little absinthe, and he used no drugs except when his sufferings became so intolerable that they prevented him from painting. When he came to Tahiti, he was a diabetic as well as the victim of a terrible disease. His sores would not heal, for in these 'Blessed Isles' open wounds close with difficulty, and sometimes not at all.

In 1904 a small dispatch-boat, the *Durance*, brought back from the Marquesas the few cases containing Gauguin's sack-cloth paintings, his drawings and his

wood-carvings, and these were exhibited before being sold by public auction.

The intelligentsia and the officials, mustering up their courage at last when faced with nothing more fearful than a corpse, got ready for the pickings. The famous carved panel *La maison du jouir* was bought for a few francs, and as it was too long to transport as a whole, it was *sawn* in two!

THE 'QUEER FELLOW'S' FRIENDS

Old Father Xavier of Punaauia knew Gauguin well. He spoke of the painter at some length:

"When he landed at Tahiti he was a fine gentleman, proudly flaunting a goatee-beard and the flowing black tie of an artist. Soon, however, in order to dis-



By courtesy of Messrs Wildenstein & Co.

The original of this Tahitian landscape painted by Gauguin in 1899 shows, with its strong and vivid contrasts of colour, how perfectly he interpreted the strange nature of his 'tropical paradise'

tinguish himself from the crowd, he adopted 'artist' airs all his own, wearing canvas shoes painted yellow and a wide felt hat adorned with a bow of red ribbon.

"He first mixed with 'high society': officers, doctors and the like; he went to restaurants and clubs. Then, suddenly, without any apparent reason, he left for the 'zone', turned 'kanak' (native), took a vahiné and cut himself off altogether from civilized life.

"He was a queer neighbour. He worked unceasingly at his paintings and sculpted on anything he could find. Nothing was despised. He used tree-trunks, packing-cases, even the staves of wine-casks. Before he left for the Marquesas he entrusted his wood-carvings to my care. After a time, no news having come from the man and I finding this pile of wood an encumbrance, I used it to make a pig-sty.

"It was long after his death that I learnt that he had talent. Americans came crowding to our island and they were very eager to pay any amount of money for whatever remained of Gauguin's works. A pane of glass that he painted was sent to San Francisco and sold for 30,000 francs.

"As for me, I hastened to dig up the wood of my pig-sty in the hope that I

could save at least one or two pieces. Too late! The panels had all rotted. . . .

"No, really, I should never have thought that this queer fellow had any talent! I shall never forget the trick he played on us. Our little boy had just died and my wife asked Gauguin to paint his portrait. He painted the child's hair blue and his face a brilliant yellow. My poor wife was terribly upset and refused the painting—'Oh, Monsieur Gauguin!' she said. 'You've painted my little one's hair blue!' 'Of course not, madam', he answered, 'it is violet.'"

Another friend of his was Teipo, the good old Tahitian who often treated Gauguin's sores with herbs from the valley. He told me:

"How funny you white people are! First you insult your own kind and spit on them, and when they die you name a street after them and honour them with a statue!"

A PORTRAIT AND A FAN

"Gauguin painted my portrait", Vaïté Goupil, one of the few intellectual women of Papeete, told me.

"I was then ten years old; my hair was cut with a fringe and I wore a long dress with severe pleats. I posed for Gauguin, sitting stiffly on a high chair.



The fan painted by Gauguin for Mme. Goupil of Papeete; once defaced by her younger daughter, it is now treasured by the elder



Self-portrait, painted in 1896. Gauguin, born in Paris in 1848, began life as a stockbroker. He became a professional painter in 1887. After exploring the possibilities of Brittany and Martinique, he reached Tahiti in 1891 and eventually settled in the Marquesas where he died in 1903

"At the time, Gauguin was living like a native, his flowered pareu wrapped round his body. His hut was made of bamboo, and it lacked the most necessary things. I stayed only as long as the sitting demanded and then quickly ran back home where the orderliness, the polished furniture and the large armchairs were a comforting contrast.

"My father found the finished portrait so unlike me, so ugly, that he at once had it removed to the attic.

*Reçu le 18 Mai 1892 de Monsieur
Goupil la somme de la faillite
du Sieur Ah-Kong Pa Soumme de
trente six francs 75 centimes pour
ouze jours de gardiennage des
meubles et objets de la faillite -
Paul Gauguin*

"In 1906 some friends of ours came over from France and they talked about the painter who had recently died. People were now discussing him and making a fuss about him in Europe and in America. My father was most astonished; he promptly sent me to the attic to fetch my portrait. Soon afterwards it was sold to Berheim, the art dealer, and in Charles Morice's book it was erroneously reproduced as 'Portrait de Mademoiselle Schuffenecker'.

"We also had a fan painted by Gauguin; he had given it to my mother, whom he greatly admired. My younger sister disliked the thing so much that she spitefully scribbled all over it in pencil and made a

mess of the painter's work. Today I receive most fantastic offers for it!

"Gauguin had come penniless to Tahiti, so he drew on his wooden floor the pieces of furniture that were missing. 'He always lacks the fifty centimes that go to make a full franc', my father, who was a lawyer at Papeete, used to say. He often asked Gauguin to do odd jobs for him. Look, here is a receipt signed in Gauguin's handwriting."

Vaité Goupil handed me a yellowish piece of paper on which, in a writing now faded, the painter acknowledged 'the receipt on May the 18th, 1892, from M. Goupil, the assignee in bankruptcy of M. Ah-Kong, of the sum of 36 francs 75 centimes in payment for keeping for eleven days the furniture and effects belonging to the said bankrupt'.

Far from running down the painter's memory, Vaité Goupil liked talking to me about him, and she gave me much authentic and exact information.

She still remembers seeing Gauguin's drawings (which he bartered for some small amount of wine or groceries) used as paper wrappings for vanilla in the Chinaman's shop at Papeete.

THROWN INTO THE LAGOON

Oscar is a big, jovial fellow, sturdy and talkative. He is a Tahitian with American and Swedish blood. He is a jack-of-all-trades; at one time or another he has been supercargo, steward on board a four-masted schooner and slave-dealer. He was even famous once. Accused—whether rightly or wrongly—of barratry, he was made to serve a sentence of five years in jail. Just now he is Papeete's most flourishing butcher.

"If I had not been such a blockhead, madam, today I should be a millionaire," Oscar told me. "When Gauguin left for the Marquesas, my father bought his little house at Punaauia. I was nine years old at the time. The crew of a British four-master, the *Pyrenees*, had just towed back

to Tahiti a sailing-vessel that had caught fire at sea. My father, Axel, was a regular godsend to sailors at that time. When they were out of work he somehow always managed to find them a berth on a sailing-boat outward bound.

"The crew of the *Pyrenees* were then waiting to put out to sea. My father seized upon the opportunity and he asked them to follow me to the 'zone' of Punaauia to help me 'clear up' the house where Gauguin had lived.

"In that house the doors and the window panes were painted, the beams were sculpted all over. On the verandah there were three trunks full of oil paintings and drawings, all in good condition. So many of them that I did not know what to do with them!

"Later, as I rested in my bed, I could not help being terrified by the monstrous 'tikis' (idols) that looked so awful in the moonlight, and I could not sleep. We Tahitians are scared of the Tupapaus, the evil spirits that prowl about the huts at night. I had no doubt that the 'tikis' that Gauguin sculpted were Tupapaus. It preyed more and more upon my mind and one morning, no longer able to resist my terror, I ordered the crew of the *Pyrenees* to carry the idols as well as the contents of the three boxes onto the reef. In a minute it was all over. I had thrown away a million into the lagoon."

THE TAHITIAN EVE AND HER SON

It was in the Punaauia 'zone', not far from the hut where the painter had lived,



Gauguin's triptych, 'What are we? Whence did we come? Where are we going?', photographed in his miserable hut in Tahiti in 1898. It now belongs to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts



Rende Hamon

Émil, Gauguin's son, whose passion is cock-fighting



Rende Hamon

His granddaughter Apollina, 'best girl' of a Mission

GAUGUIN'S RELATIVES AND FRIENDS IN THE SOUTH SEAS

Ahura, Émil's mother, once Gauguin's favourite model

Rende Hamon



Old Père Levergoz, who longs for distant Brittany

Rende Hamon



that I met Pahura Taurua Vahiné. Tall, stout, grey-haired and toothless, she sat rasping her coconut and singing an *uté*.

Émil, her son by Gauguin, acted as interpreter, for Pahura talks nothing but Maori. She can still remember—a rare thing among these thoughtless women—the good ‘Coquin’, as she calls him (Coquin, in French, means rascal). He was ever so gentle and worked unceasingly at his queer old colours. He was unhappy with his vahiné in France, so Pahura told me. He came to the Pahura Isle to forget.

She lived with him for six years. After she gave birth to Émil, however, she did not want to follow Coquin to the Marquesas, where—so she said—there were nothing but ‘savages’.

Pahura, Taurua was Gauguin’s most perfect model.

In the magnificent triptych, ‘What are we? Whence did we come? Where are we going?’, Pahura is the Tahitian Eve, whose golden radiance suffused with joy and brightness Gauguin’s humble dwelling.

What today remains of that glorious Eve, of that beauty which Gauguin fixed forever on canvas? Nothing but a heavy matron who breeds the Chinaman’s guinea-pigs for a living, plays the accordion and goes to church with a big Bible under her arm.

Gauguin once wrote to his friend de Monfried: ‘Just as I am writing, my vahiné is suffering the pangs of childbirth. Maybe this is a good thing for me, as the child will perhaps make life more bearable, that life which weighs so heavily upon me. . . .’

Émil has Gauguin’s eyes and arched nose. He is tall and broad-shouldered; but his is a simpleton’s mind. His one passion in life? Cock-fighting!

Émil showed me his cock, a red-feathered bird in a dark cage mounted on poles, with a bedraggled tail of which he is inordinately proud. Every Sunday he takes it to Titiaro, in the Fataaia valley,

where the cock-fights are being staged. His cock has already won five championships.

Soft and lazy Émil—he lets his cock support him!

IN THE MARQUESAS

“It’s no easy matter to get to the Marquesas”, Winnie Brander, captain of the *Tereora*, smilingly said to me. “My schooner, a copra-vessel, pitches and tosses, because there is a heavy swell all the way through. There is no fresh water to wash with and food lasts only three days. Still, if you’ve made up your mind and are not too squeamish, come along anyhow. . . .”

After thirteen days sailing in a contrary wind and a high swell, with squalls and mist, the schooner dropped anchor in a purple twilight in the Bay of Traitors at Greater Dominica.

On that very day, thirty-six years before, Gauguin landed on this inhospitable shore where the great swells of the Southern Ocean break with a monotonous and thundering boom. He left his trunks and his easel on the black pebbles and, drunk with joy, he made his way down into the lane hedged with hibiscus that leads to the village of Atuona.

The sight of Dominica produced in him a rapture such as he had never experienced since he had come to the South Seas. Everything on the island sang of the earth’s fecundity. In the deep valleys grew magnificent trees with fruits galore: the sweet apple of Cytherus, the fragrant lemon and the Dracana with its brilliant flowers. The Komako (the yellow nightingale) and the Patiotio (the black parrot) cooed sweetly amidst the luxuriant foliage. Around and above the huts, the swallow, the ‘smoke-eater’, swooped ceaselessly in magic circles. How happy and enchanted was he, the lonely rover, he who wanted only two years of health to attain his artistic maturity.

He no longer had a thought for his



Coll. Vianorama

'The Three Tahitians' is one of the best of Gauguin's native studies

material woes or worries, and he troubled not at all about Émil or Pahura. Tahiti seemed far away indeed.

EPISCOPAL IMPRESSIONS

In the sunken lane which Gauguin so often used—did it not remind him of those lanes in Brittany which he dearly loved?—I met Timo, the Chief of Atuana. He wisely told me: "The 'Catholicos' are the lords and masters of the Marquesas. You'd better make friends with the *Epicopo* (Bishop)."

Monseigneur, a hoary, bearded and masterful man, received me kindly enough. Almost at once I daringly uttered the painter's name. Monseigneur instantly frowned:

"Gauguin? No . . . Coquin. That's what we called him. To be sure, he did

not like us. As for me, I did not speak to him unless he first approached me, and I'd rather have avoided him if I could.

"I hear that people are now praising his talent. Well, I should not have wanted his Virgin Mary—a yellow woman with purple hair—as a gift. The men and women he painted were all as naked as Adam and Eve; it really was very shocking.

"How curious! A few minutes ago you sat exactly as Gauguin did when he first called on me. Yes, he was turning over the pages of the very same Marquesan grammar that was in your hands when I came in. . . .

"Of course, I did not know him then and so I helped him. I sold him one of our plots of ground not far from here at a low price. There he built his hut. I wish

I had known better!

"Well, well, we have had our own back on him. You may not know that Gauguin had a daughter by a Marquesan native. The woman lives in the Hekeani district some twenty miles away. She fell ill and asked us to look after her daughter, the gentle Apollina. I'll show you the girl."

In the garden of the Mission's 'enclosure' young Marquesan girls were singing whilst they hung up the week's washing. Monseigneur beckoned to Apollina, a robust but shy girl. She came forward, hiding her pretty golden-brown face in her hands.

"She is the best girl here," said Monseigneur. "Next Sunday, Assumption Day, she will bear the banner of the Virgin Mary in the Holy Procession. Just think of it—if only Coquin could see her. . . !"

And on this Monseigneur chuckled with glee.

PÈRE LEVERGOZ AND OTHERS

Every morning, sitting astride his lean pony, old Levergoz, who was born at Quimper-Corentin in Brittany, rides into Atuona to fetch his bread. His legs are swollen with *féfé*; he is weak and of a small build; but he never complains.

"One suffers a bit, but one carries on all the same. Gauguin, too, suffered, and yet he never stopped painting.

"Life's short, Père Levergoz," he would say to me. 'My time'll soon be up.'

"He was like a real father to us. He helped us, even though he was himself so poor. The Marquesans liked him and respected him because he was the only European who'd come to these isles without wanting in the least to exploit them. That, however, did not prevent them from swindling *him* sometimes. It's in their blood, you know. Gauguin didn't mind, anyhow, and he protected them without trying to teach or to convert them, because they were free men and he always looked upon them as free men.

"He told me that, apart from his Inca blood—his mother was a Peruvian—he

might also have Maori blood in his veins. Mind you, the Marquesas were discovered by Spaniards from Peru and the sailors might well have returned to Peru with some Polynesian children."

Père Levergoz sealed our friendship with a glass of wine at Bob's, Atuana's only tradesman.

"It doesn't beat our good old Quimper cider, does it?" said he, nodding his head reminiscently. "Ah! I miss my dear Brittany. I'm too old to go back now, but often I hear the bells of Sainte-Croix and wooden clogs clattering down the rue Keréon where I was born. . . ."

Timo, the Chief of Atuana, intelligent and cultured, still remembers the 'good white man'. He opened a drawer and showed me a silver spoon that had belonged to Gauguin.

"The Americans are always wanting to buy it as a souvenir, but no fear, I'll never sell it!

"So! You're *Tahiaimi metao Koké*—the princess who's come to cherish Koké's



Ronde Hamon

Such a girl as this Gauguin must have painted many times; her facial resemblance to the women on the opposite page is unmistakable

memory. Yes, I believe you, you look as though you'd love us as he did.

"Tioka, who adopted me, was Pastor Vernier's deacon and Koké's great friend. He vowed him an everlasting gratitude when, one day, the floods having borne away his hut, Koké made over to Tioka a piece of his own ground and had the agreement signed before a solicitor.

"Tioka was very thin and he was tattooed from head to foot. He'd even been jailed for 'cannibalism', but he was soon set free, and he believed he owed his freedom to Koké's intervention. From that time on, he considered Gauguin, his hut and his ground as *tapu*.

"Koké used to give him tobacco and he often teased him with some question as to whether human flesh tasted good. How Tioka's teeth would glitter! He had extraordinary teeth—so long and white they were! He could have opened a tin of canned fruit with them.

"It's I who look after Koké's grave. It's up there on the hill, in the Mission

Cemetery. I'll take you round to look at it. You'll see what a lovely view Koké has. He can look right over the Bay and hear the wind and the nightingale that sing for him."

THE 'WHITE PAREU'

Tioka it was who brought together Gauguin and Paul Vernier. The latter's brother, a pastor at Papeete, was good enough to let me see Paul Vernier's notebook, as yet unpublished.

"When Paul Vernier went to 'take a breather' at Tahiti he sometimes came across Gauguin. He would have been pleased to speak to the strange man but dared not do so, being only a 'white pareu', as the painter was wont to call all ministers of the Church.

"Vernier, a man with very independent ideas, who loved a joke and a chat, waited for a suitable opportunity to make the solitary painter's acquaintance. He by no means admired his paintings, but he felt in the man that spiritual essence which made him different from others.

"Vernier's native deacon, Tioka, when telling Gauguin about the Marquesas, frequently spoke to him of the minister. By and by they bowed to one another and even stopped to have a chat, for Gauguin thought well of this 'white pareu' who was good to the natives. Gradually they became friends, intimate friends even, and cracked many a joke together. Gauguin sometimes spoke to Father Vernier about what he, Gauguin, hated at Tahiti: 'Papeete', he said, 'is something like Europe, only made worse through colonial snobbery. It's nothing but cheap European paste goods.'"

Six months before Gauguin died, he sent Vernier a note in which he begged him to 'enlighten' him about his physical ailments. Vernier at once went to see him and he found him weak and rather depressed. He gave him some 'Gibert's Syrup' which did him a lot of good. Gauguin was grateful to him and visited



Basel, Coll. Walter Geiser

Gauguin's portrait of his mother, a Peruvian



In the model for 'The Girl with the Fan', slender, supple, with thick, hair and golden skin, Gauguin found the embodiment of Tahitian beauty



Seeing the likeness between Gauguin's niece Mareta and 'The Girl with the Fan', the Author made her pose for her photograph in the attitude of her uncle's famous picture

him shortly afterwards.

"What can I do for you, Pastor?"

"Why . . . nothing. . . . I want nothing but your friendship."

Gauguin then noticed a small broken harmonium in a corner of the drawing-room; he at once wanted to have it mended, but the clergyman did not accept his offer. Compliments and kind words were exchanged, so much so that Gauguin sent Vernier on the following day an 'etching' that Tioka delivered, a portrait of the poet Mallarmé with a crow's head above it. He had dedicated the work in his small and neat handwriting: 'To Monsieur Paul Vernier, An artistic trifle'.

The good clergyman, who never kept anything for himself, offered the etching to Commandant Lagorio, who had called at the Marquesas. The French officer was deeply touched and, as a matter of fact, he never parted with the work. During the war, however, he was in command of the *Kléber* when his ship struck a mine and was blown to pieces in the port of Brest. The Commandant Lagorio was very much grieved at being unable to save his etching!

THE PAINTER'S LAST RESTING-PLACE

Before leaving Dominica for the other islands in the archipelago, I went as a last homage to Gauguin's grave.

Banal as are all tombs made by men, it was yet moving in its simplicity. The faithful Tioka, having found in Gauguin's hut a slab of that red clay peculiar to Oceania and which the painter had moulded into form, had roughly engraved the name of GAUGUIN on it and then piously had placed it on the tomb.

'I have worked well and used my life well, I should even say intelligently and courageously.' So Gauguin wrote shortly before death. 'How courageously indeed!' I thought, as I went down the hill where, in death as in life, all alone, facing the Pacific Ocean that he loved so



Rene Hamon

The artist's grave, faithfully tended by Tioka

much to contemplate, he at last lies at rest.

Gauguin alone was able to give a living expression to the complex character of the South Sea Isles. When he painted from Nature, he certainly did not let himself be deceived by the mere appearance of these Isles, which, as was found later, could so easily become stylized and commonplace. Playing on the prodigious keyboard of colour and harmony, he knew which notes to choose, and he knew which chords would blaze forth in final concert.

When he landed at Dominica, Gauguin intuitively perceived that everything on this island would lend to his art a definite conclusion, and that here his dream would find its goal.

It little matters whether or not he expressed and reproduced the much-discussed 'exotic truthfulness'. Should it not rather be said that, on leaving Tahiti, he had freed himself of the shackles which bind and hamper civilized man and that he had come into his own as a painter who belongs, not to a particular country, but to the world?

Places and Products

VI. Bulgarian Rose Oil

by J. ALLAN CASH

To buy a bottle of good quality scent may seem at first sight an unlikely method of intervening in Balkan affairs. Yet those who perform this act may be doing so in two ways: by helping to sustain an industry employing an important group of peasant proprietors in Bulgaria; and by adding to that country's slender stock of freely negotiable foreign exchange

IN the centre of Bulgaria, sheltered between the Balkan and the Sredna Mountains, lies the Valley of Roses. A lovely, fertile valley it is, dotted with villages and quaint little towns. It stretches for some eighty miles between Klisura and Kazanlik, and in width varies from ten to thirty miles. To the north stands the lofty range of the Balkan Mountains, with Mount Ferdinand, the highest peak, rising nearly 8000 feet into the sky. The Sredna and Sernena Mountains, to the south, while they do not approach this height, serve to create the particular climate that is so suitable for the special roses from which the oil, or attar, is made.

The people who live in this valley are, of course, mostly Bulgarian. But there are also many Turks, reminders of the Turkish domination of Bulgaria which lasted for five hundred years until, in 1878, Bulgaria's autonomy was recognized. Yet, although the Turks were cruel masters and oppressed the Bulgars sorely, one finds Turk and Bulgar today living and working peacefully together in the Valley of Roses, and in other parts of the country too. The Turk maintains his own customs and religion; many of the villages and towns contain the minarets of mosques, and some of the Turkish women still veil themselves. In the market scenes their striped *férejés* provide a brilliant contrast to the more sombre dresses of the Bulgarian women.

Gypsies, too, live in the Valley of Roses. Some are nomads, wandering from one town to another, selling their baskets and

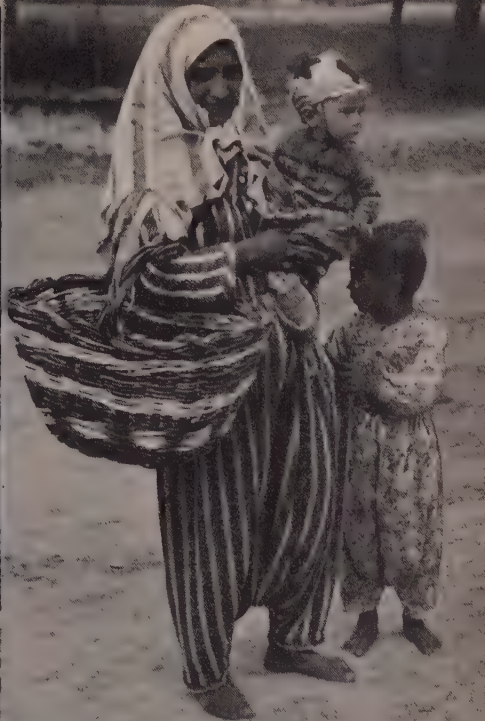
wooden spoons in the markets. But many of them have settled down, and every town now has its gypsy quarter, where these lazy, happy-go-lucky, dark-skinned people live in primitive little houses.

Life moves slowly in this part of the Balkans, as slowly as the ox and the water-buffalo, which, as draught animals, are more frequently met with than the horse. Yet many of the products of civilization are creeping in. Roads are being improved, so that in some places motor lorries are supplanting the creaking ox-carts. And many of the villages have electricity, although one rarely finds water laid on; perhaps it is that the village fountain is too much of a social centre to be done away with yet awhile. Few of the





In the centre of the Valley of Roses, sheltered by the Balkan Mountains, lies the little town of Karlovo



Assembled on market day one may see representatives of all the Valley's inhabitants. Bulgarian women (above), with sombre dresses and plain shawls tied round their heads, are the most numerous

Gypsies (top right), who have a special quarter in every town, provide the brightest colours. Their costumes catch the eye even more than the striped fêrejés worn by the Turkish women. These, two of whom are seen (right) with their backs turned, are the descendants of Bulgaria's former rulers. The Turks left behind them one good legacy—the art of making rose oil





All photographs by J. Allan Cash

A show of flowers is unknown in the Valley of Roses, for the half-open blooms are picked every morning before the hot sunshine has extracted the best of their scent

streets are paved, even in the towns, but watering-carts may be seen laying the dust in dry weather.

The time to visit the Valley of Roses is from mid-May to mid-June, for this is the season of rose oil, and the warm, moist air is heavy with the wafted scent of the flowers. The best rose for oil extraction is *Rosa Damascena* (Damask Rose), a semi-double light red, having 30 to 36 petals and a strong fragrance. Another popular type is *Rosa Moschata* (Musk Rose); this is more prolific in flowers, but its oil does not approach the standard of the other in either quantity or quality. These roses are grown in fields, just like any other crop, and the bushes are maintained at a height

of four to five feet, with sufficient space between them to allow for picking. You would naturally think that they must make a marvellous show of colour during the season; but in this the visitor will be disappointed, for very little can be seen of the flowers until the bushes are approached quite closely, and even then most of the buds are only just opening. The reason is that the roses have to be picked every day, the blooms being taken as soon as they open and before the hot sunshine has the chance to extract some of their scent. And so a rose bush in the Valley of Roses is never allowed to reach its full splendour.

Women do most of the picking. They start at dawn and work till about midday.

They place the roses in a basket which, when full, is emptied into a sack. The sacks are transferred to a cart and, as soon as a load is ready, they are taken off to the nearest distillery. Picking must be done before the sun becomes very hot; but hot sunshine, interspersed with showers of rain, is essential for the successful growing of these roses. In this respect the climate during the rose oil season is very accommodating. Every day, almost without exception, there are summer showers or, occasionally, severe thunderstorms; but as soon as the rain is over the sun beats down hot and strong, bringing out the roses in great numbers.

For the most part the peasants are very poor, owning only small pieces of land; yet there is hardly one who does not grow at least a few roses. Often a man may be seen taking but one or two small sacks of roses to the distillery, either carrying them on his back, or, if he be a Turk, sitting on a donkey with the sacks underneath him. Should his wife accompany him, she will walk, for that is the custom among these Turks.

Much of the rose-picking, like other farm work in Bulgaria, is done on communal lines. That is to say, a peasant who has a lot of roses to be picked will ask his friends, or more likely his wife will ask *her* friends, for assistance; in return she will help any of them when their roses are ready for picking. Thus one sees large groups of women going from one field to another gathering roses, when each field may belong to a different person. There are many traditions attached to this communal working, traditions which are never broken. For instance, the hostess, the woman who invites the others to help her, must provide the food which is eaten during work in the fields. Then the oldest unmarried woman is automatically appointed as leader; it is she who decrees when the work shall start, though it is the hostess who decides when a halt shall be called for a rest or for food.

Sometimes paid labour is employed in the fields, but the wages are very low. The grower obtains four *leva* (equal to about twopence) per kilogram from the distillery. The most that a woman can pick in an hour is ten kilos, which only bring in to the grower, to cover all his expenses, about one shilling and eightpence. Hence the readiness of these people to help each other, so that their expenses may be kept down to the minimum. Life for the Bulgarian peasant is altogether very primitive; he manages to keep body and soul together, but he does little more. His house is small and, according to our standards, very overcrowded; one seldom finds anything but earthen floors, and on these some members of the family are sure to have to sleep, for there are rarely enough beds to hold everybody.



As each basket is filled it is emptied into a sack; the sacks are then loaded on carts and taken to the nearest distillery



All the roses must be distilled within eighteen hours of picking, so that from early morning until late afternoon an ever-increasing queue of vehicles waits patiently to unload the harvest

Approximately 15,400 acres of land are under roses in Bulgaria, and the yield of 6 to 7 million kilos provides most of the world's supply of attar of roses. But this little country has not always held such a position; rose oil used once to come from Turkey and Persia, until some of the special roses were brought from those countries and planted beneath the Balkan Mountains. So well did they thrive that this one valley soon surpassed the total production of rose oil of Turkey and Persia together. Today rose oil comes fourth on the list of Bulgaria's exports; it is used not so much as a scent itself, but as a basis for all the best perfumes produced in Great Britain, the United States of America, France and many other countries.

About a hundred and forty villages in the Valley of Roses are more or less

dependent on the rose oil industry. Most of them have a distillery; but where there is none, the roses are brought in to a central receiving station, whence they are passed on. The government, through the Agricultural Bank, controls the entire business. This became necessary a few years ago because of the growing practice of adulterating the oil. Bulgaria was in danger of losing its good name for rose oil, and so the government stepped in and instituted the present strict supervision. At each distillery, and at the receiving stations, there is a government inspector who receives the roses, weighs them personally and gives a receipt to the grower. This receipt entitles the grower to go to the bank after the season is over and collect (1937 figures) four leva per kilo of roses delivered. The bank charges 4.40 leva per

kilo to the distillery, adding the 10 per cent to cover the expenses of supervision.

From eight o'clock onwards the roses begin to arrive at the distilleries. First come the few small sacks of the poorer peasants; then, as the morning proceeds, deliveries increase; a number of ox-carts appear and, later on, during the afternoon, the road outside may contain quite a queue of vehicles all piled high with bags of roses. Distilling is in full swing by eleven o'clock and it continues without a break until all the day's delivery has been consumed. This is because the roses must be distilled within eighteen hours or so of picking; they become quite hot when packed into the sacks, and after a while this heat causes them to lose most of their perfume. It is one of the inspector's jobs to see that the roses are not left too long.

There are three types of stills; by far the

most common is the naked fire type, so named because it consists essentially of a copper retort with a fire underneath it, not unlike the old-fashioned washing-boiler of the home. The most modern type is the steam-heated still, in which, as the name implies, the retorts are heated by steam, and not by direct fire. Another still, not much used, is the vacuum type, in which a partial vacuum is created in the retort. This reduces the boiling-point and it is claimed that better quality rose oil is produced in a shorter time.

Whichever type is used, the roses are poured into the retorts (or alembics, as they are sometimes called) and boiled in water, for two to three hours in the naked fire stills, rather less in the steam type, and only about an hour and a half in the vacuum type. The retorts vary greatly in size, the smallest ones holding 150 kilos



First to arrive at the distillery are the poorer peasants with their few small sacks. An old Turk rests while his roses are taken from the donkey's back to be weighed



In the oldest and most common type of still used for making rose oil an open fire heats, from underneath, the copper retort—

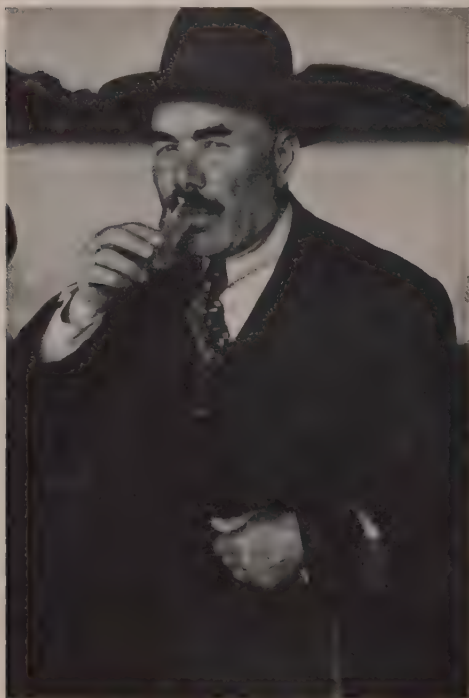
—into which the roses are poured, to be boiled with water for about three hours. The smallest retorts hold 150 kilos of roses and the largest up to 1000 kilos



The steam from the retorts passes through cold-water condensers (ranged in the background above) and the condensate is collected in metal containers with glass tops. The oil floats to the surface in a thick band, maintained at a constant level by syphoning off the rose water beneath it



of roses and the largest up to 1000 kilos. The steam from the retorts is passed through cold-water condensers, the condensate being collected in large metal containers having small glass tops. The oil, which condenses together with the water, floats to the top (in this case the glass tops of the containers) and is thus always on view during operations. A constant level is maintained in these containers by syphoning off the rose water beneath the oil into large open vessels nearby. This rose water itself contains a small quantity of rose oil, and it is therefore put back into the retorts and re-distilled. It is supposed to have excellent medicinal qualities and the people engaged in the industry are continually taking sips of it. They say it is good for every known stomach ailment. Its taste, to the uninitiated, is most unpleasant, but



Rose water is prized by the Bulgars as an aid to health and beauty

doubtless the sweet breath that it must give one helps to balance the garlic with which so much Bulgarian food is flavoured.

The government inspector must not sleep or go off duty at all while distilling is in process. He supervises the placing of the roses in the retorts, sealing the openings each time. The condensers behind the retorts are also sealed and so, of course, are the condensate containers. The inspector himself draws off the rose oil each day, pours it into large bottles or the special metal containers in which it is exported, sealing every vessel with a stamp every time it has to be opened. When he sleeps, which is in the few short hours between the end of one day's distilling—perhaps 4 A.M.—and the beginning of the next, the rose oil either remains beneath his bed or is kept under lock and key.

It takes 30 Damask Roses to make one drop of rose oil, and 32,000 roses, weighing 180 lb., to make one ounce. 3500 to 4000 kilos of roses yield 1 kilo of oil; and so attar of roses is justly expensive. Its price is stabilized today at about £50 per kilo. An average day's output of rose oil from a large distillery, such as that of Botu Pappazoglou at Karlovo, would be about 4½ kilos, nearly enough to fill one of the glass bottles in which the fresh attar is kept. This would be about 10 lb. weight of rose oil, worth some £225. Five million roses, weighing nine tons, would go to make this amount of oil. This vast number of roses is consumed every day, on an average, during the four to five weeks of the season; all the rest of the year the distillery lies idle, unless, as is being done occasionally, the owner distils some mint later on.

After the rose oil has been placed in bottles it sets into a sticky solid of about the consistency of vaseline, but of a dark green, dirty-looking colour. The bottles are placed in the sunshine on a window ledge, where the heat of the sun melts the oil and allows impurities suspended in it to sink to the bottom. The liquid is then poured off, filtered until it is quite pure and finally



The rose oil, when drawn off and placed in bottles, becomes a sticky solid. Before being filtered it is melted in the sunshine, which allows impurities to sink to the bottom.

placed in round metal containers for export. It is stored in the vaults of the Agricultural Bank, whence the Bank exports it on the instructions of the distiller, according to the orders which the latter receives from abroad. Most of the big distillers make journeys each year to France, Germany, Great Britain, and even to America, to sell their rose oil.

A few years ago the price of rose oil soared up to 100,000 leva per kilo; peasants increased their acreage under roses and distillers extended their plants to produce far greater quantities. Then, of course, manufacturers of scents and soaps who used the oil looked round for a substitute that was not so expensive. And they found one—a synthetic perfume closely resembling real rose oil. The demand for the Bulgarian product suddenly ceased.

Many distillers found it impossible to operate the whole of their plants; some closed down altogether. Meanwhile, there was a large surplus of oil in storage in Bulgaria. The peasants found there was little or no demand for their roses; countless fields were left unpicked, and for once they really were a show of colour.

At this point the government stepped in with its control plan. It bought up all the surplus supplies of rose oil and stored them. It also took over a number of bankrupt distilleries and, together with the Co-operative Bank, ran them as going concerns. Every distiller who sold rose oil abroad had to buy half the amount from the bank, and thus the surplus was gradually reduced. These strict measures also served as a most successful check on over-production; they soon put the rose oil



The Government Inspector packs and seals the day's output; its average weight is about ten pounds, the product of nine tons of roses

business in a much better position and, with the price down to a fixed figure of 25,000 leva per kilo, the demand from abroad began to return. For, after all, there is nothing quite so good as the real thing when it comes to rose oil. Distillers are gradually taking over their plants from the bank again. In 1936 the bank accounted for 78 per cent of the production; but in 1937 this had dropped to 66 per cent, private distillers having produced the rest under the bank's supervision.

Through government legislation distillery plant is continually being modernized. Old types of stills, which were in operation until a few years ago, are no longer to be

found. Every encouragement is given to the introduction of new equipment. Mr Pappazoglou, for instance, recently installed at Karlovo a new steam-type distilling plant at a cost of five million leva (£12,000). He also has a naked-fire distillery at the same place and several smaller ones in different parts of the Valley of Roses.

Exports of rose oil in 1937 totalled nearly 2200 kilos. France took the most, 973 kilos, then came England with 432 kilos, then Germany with 278 kilos (a big increase from 121 kilos in 1936), then the U.S.A. with 267 kilos, and finally Switzerland with 179 kilos. Production during 1937 was 2850 kilos, as compared with 1812 kilos in 1936; so that there was actually a surplus of rose oil again.

The government's interest does not stop at controlling the industry. It runs an up-to-date experimental farm at Kazanlik, where many roses are grown, and distilled in a small modern plant. A new type of rose has been developed, similar to the Damask Rose, but with more than seventy petals and a corresponding increase in oil. This might seem to be a rather useless sort of achievement, when the demand for rose oil is almost constant; but the poverty among the Bulgarian peasants is chiefly due to the small amounts of land which most of them possess, and the only way they can increase their income is by growing more profitable crops. Hence, if they can grow a new type of rose which gives twice as much oil, they can reduce their acreage under roses by one half and grow other crops on their spare land. The cost of picking the roses will also be reduced. This is, in essence, the agricultural policy of the Bulgarian Government, and it is highly successful. Thanks to wise supervision, Bulgaria is likely to remain for a long time the world's main source of rose oil.

Germans in the Himalayas

Though it has recently received a severe set-back, the promotion of more harmonious relations between England and Germany must remain a cause dear to every lover of peace. Without better understanding on both sides, that cause can make no steady progress: and The Geographical Magazine may help to increase understanding, on one side at least, by giving publicity to a book—Himalayan Quest (Nicholson and Watson), edited by Paul Bauer—in which the achievements of certain Germans in the geographical field are recorded.

Every Englishman who has had much experience of Germany and the Germans knows that their outlook on life is profoundly, though in many respects not superficially, different from our own. This is not the place to attempt an analysis of the difference, which has roots extending far back into the history of both nations. One aspect of it is afforded by the German mountaineers whose exertions in the Himalayas were sustained by a desire to prove something about Germany. The following extracts from Sir Francis Younghusband's Foreword and that of the Translator make the point and explain the circumstances. It would, however, be a great mistake to accept as a full explanation Dr Bauer's statement that 'the motive underlying the German Himalayan expedition is to be sought in the events of 1914-1918'. Far truer is Dr Rickmer-Rickmers' confession: 'I am a German and therefore a philosopher'.

To act, as the Englishman does, on vaguely mystical or moral impulses, countering the perpetual surprises that Life has up its sleeve, the booby-traps of Fate, with a shield of determination to take nothing too seriously and to drive no theory too far, is insufficient and unsatisfying to the German. A purpose at least as deep as the human mind, a motive that can be squared with some coherent philosophy, he must have. To what extremes this faith in the sovereign virtue of formulae may lead, is shown by the attitude of the German newspapers towards foreign condemnation of German action against the Jews. According to The Times correspondent in Berlin, they declare that 'the recent measures of the Reich follow so naturally from the racial doctrine, now well enough known abroad, that the agitation to which they have given rise can only be regarded as an artificial movement sponsored by the political enemies of National Socialism'.

The Englishman will never understand his German cousin until he has learnt to appreciate his desire for a world in which action moves in unison towards a philosophical goal—even the goal of proving something which no sensible person for a moment doubts, or of fulfilling, against every dictate of humanity, a racial doctrine in which no serious scientist believes.

It should be added that the 1938 expedition did not attain the summit of Nanga Parbat.

From Sir Francis Younghusband's Foreword

THE chief interest in this book lies not in the detailed description of the climbs but in the spirit in which they were made. The main motive of the German climbers was not to establish a record . . . it was to show the world that Germany still produced men that they set forth to pit themselves against some monarch of the Himalaya.

They did not succeed in climbing the

greatest peaks—neither Kangchenjunga nor Nanga Parbat. But they did succeed in achieving their main object. They did show us that Germany still possessed men. We had never doubted it. But Germans evidently thought we did and wished to prove how wrong we were. And they have proved this and much more. . . . For one cannot read this epic story of their struggle with these tremendous mountains

without being filled with admiration of their good comradeship and devotion to their leader.

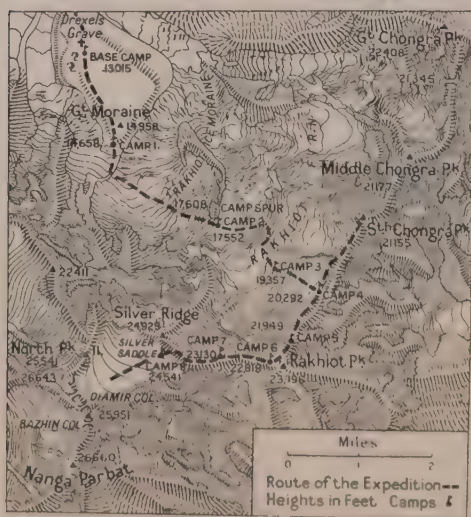
Still, love of the mountains had much to do with their going to the Himalaya. They were mountain people. In those sad post-war years when their country was suffering such fearful depression they had gone to their own mountains. And there they had discovered what many besides these Bavarians had found, that mountains had power to restore that which towns had threatened to steal—faith in the ultimate triumph of the forces working for good in the world. . . .

Many great expeditions have gone out to the Himalaya but none—not even the Everest expedition—have set forth with a nobler spirit than these Germans displayed. They had learnt that the scale of things in the Himalaya far exceeds the Alpine scale. Himalayan peaks are just twice as high as the summits of the Alps. The ascent of a Himalayan peak of the first magnitude takes not a day but a month, and expeditions require not two or three porters but a hundred. This immensely greater difference in the scale of things had by now become apparent,

and the German expeditions were organized on a scale commensurate with the scale of the Himalaya—as well as with characteristic method, thoroughness and attention to detail.

The Germans also undertook the enterprise with great seriousness. They took joy in the struggle, but seriousness was the more obvious feature. And therein they differ from the English, who keep their serious side hidden. Take Howard Somervell as an example. He was resolute enough at heart, but outwardly he was gay: he had the gay courage of the Englishman. He meant to get the better of the mountain, but he was perpetually light-hearted. This is the authentic English type, though some English climbers are apt to put on a pose of regarding the mere reaching the top as pure sensationalism beneath the notice of a true mountain climber. Even Mallory, though when he was actually on Everest he went at it like a tiger, adopted the air of indifference and wrote of 'rejoicing in the yet undimmed splendour, the undiminished glory, the unconquered supremacy of Everest'. And his words are approvingly quoted by others. The Germans would never use such words. They are much more downright. They would see to it that man is supreme over the mountain.

It was in this straightforward and determined spirit that Paul Bauer, inspired by the success of his efforts on Kangchenjunga, promoted the organization of the second expedition to Nanga Parbat, 26,600 feet in altitude, which had already been the scene of one disaster to a German expedition, and was to be the scene of another—the greatest in the whole history of mountaineering—which this book describes. And what we cannot fail to admire is the undaunted spirit which the Germans showed in face of these catastrophes. In the first assault they lost, through a terrible snowstorm, Merkl (the leader) and two companions, besides





All Photographs from 'Himalayan Quest', Nicholson and Watson

Since 1929 the Germans have made a number of expeditions to the Himalayas, directing their most determined attacks against Kangchenjunga and Nanga Parbat, both of which are as yet unconquered by man. The photograph above shows the north-west peak of Simru, near Kangchenjunga

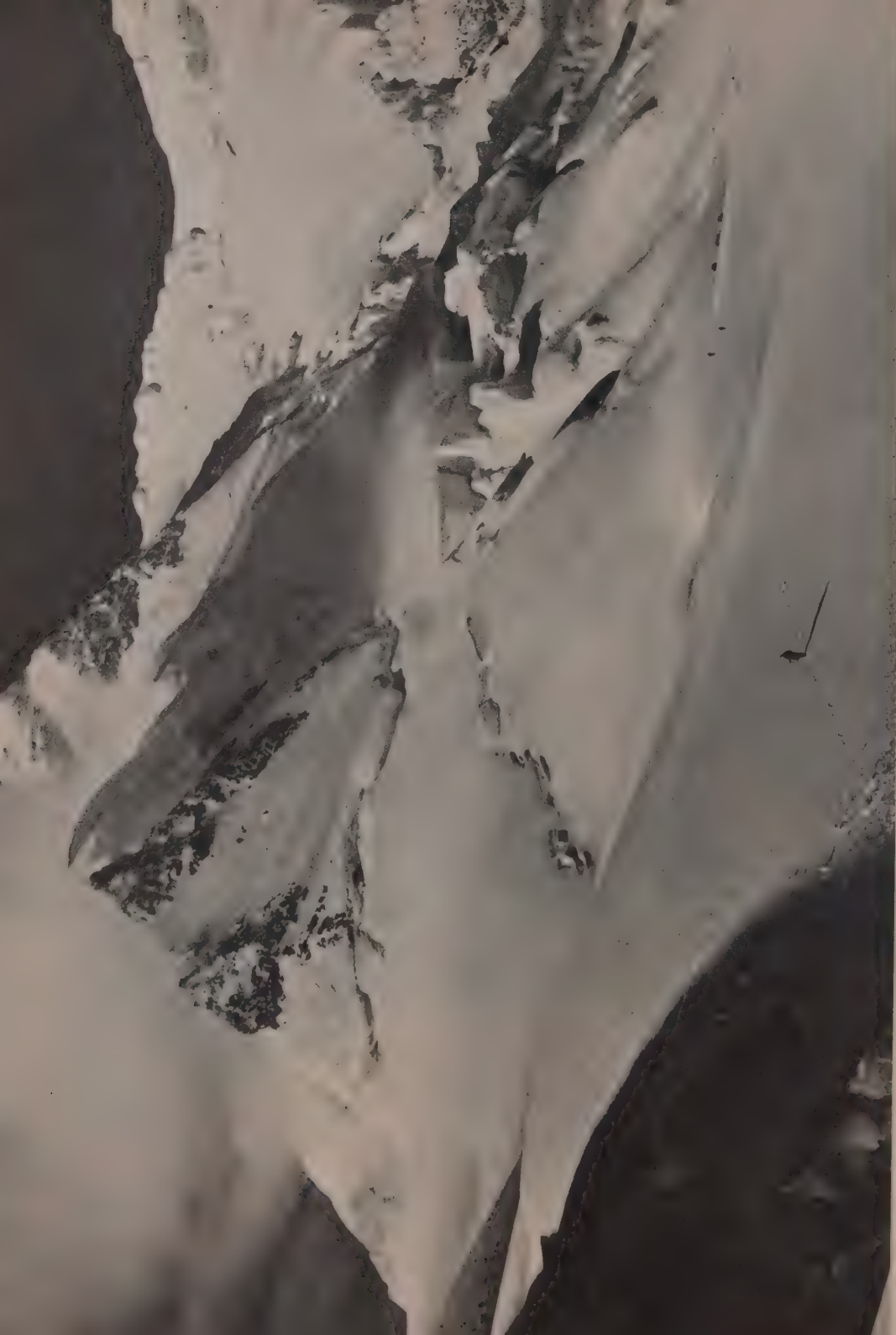




Nanga Parbat, giant of the Western Himalayas, has lured two successive German expeditions to disaster



An early stage in the assault: approaching Camp One, below the precipitous face of Nanga Parbat



The 1934 Camp Four, under Rukhiot Peak. It was here that an avalanche overwhelmed the 1937 expedition, burying seven climbers and nine porters





The grave of Hermann Schaller, who lost his life during the 1931 expedition to Kangchenjunga

Sherpa porters. In the second the whole expedition except one climber at the base were buried by an avalanche. Seven Germans and nine porters lost their lives. And yet again in this present year they renewed their assault on the mountain. . .

Only eighteen days after news of the disaster had reached Germany, Bauer and his two companions were at the Base Camp preparing to ascend the mountains. Some days later he was 20,000 feet up on the mountain at the actual scene of the disaster. There seemed little chance of finding anything, for the avalanche was of gigantic blocks of ice the size of a house and covered an area of about fifteen acres. It lay on the top of the camp in a firm, solidly frozen mass ten to thirteen feet in thickness, and it was only after endeavours which made terrific demands on heart and lungs that at last the remains were found about eleven feet below the surface. The bodies of five out of seven German climbers were recovered and all their diaries and equipment. And less than four weeks

after leaving Germany Bauer and his companions returned to the Base Camp with his difficult task accomplished.

Most determined attempts have thus been made by Germans and English on Nanga Parbat, Kangchenjunga and Everest. Not one has succeeded in reaching the summit, but many of the finest lives have been lost. And this looks like failure. So, indeed, it would be unless we deliberately set ourselves to make good come out of it. Unsuccessful though these attempts have been, they have taught the world greater respect for these mountain giants. They have increased our knowledge of the technique of mountaineering. They have fired others—other Europeans and Americans as well as Germans—to pit their skill, their courage and their endurance against the cold, the storms, the ice and snow of the mountains. Lastly, they have consolidated a comradeship of the mountains between Germans and British and between Europeans and Himalayans.

From the Translator's Foreword

SOMEWHERE in the following pages Dr Bauer confesses that whenever he has been in contact with Englishmen he has felt strongly that the English and the Germans are 'blood relations'. Nevertheless, at least as far as mountaineering is concerned, the German's mental attitude is fundamentally different from that of the Englishman and may, to some, be difficult of comprehension. It has therefore been suggested that some attempt to explain this difference may form a useful bridge between the German and English editions of Dr Bauer's book, and this I have essayed in the following notes.

J. L. Longland, a distinguished member of the 1933 English Mount Everest expedition, has said: 'It seems a pity that mountaineering has ever been acclaimed

as more, or deeper than, perhaps, the most satisfying of all forms of sport', a statement that was warmly received by many eminent English mountaineers, some of whom dismiss any loftier conception as sheer hypocrisy. German climbers too have subscribed to this idea, but with a certain reserve. Dr W. Rickmer-Rickmers, a veteran among German climbers and famous for his Asiatic explorations, has said *à propos* of mountaineering: 'I am a German and therefore a philosopher. May I be forgiven.' One might add on behalf of one's countrymen, 'I am an Englishman and therefore a sportsman. I need no forgiveness', and thus may the fundamental difference between the Englishman's and the German's approach to the formidable giants of the Himalayas be summed up, a

difference which cannot fail to strike the reader of Dr Bauer's book.

Herr von Tschammer, Germany's *Führer* in matters relating to sport, contributed the following prefatory note to the German edition of the present book:

The German climbers who attempted Nanga Parbat faced a task which demanded of them every ounce of will-power, courage and self-sacrifice. The powers of Nature brought their bold undertaking to naught, but confronted by these superior forces they did not give in—they died fighting. Our grief at the loss of such comrades is brilliantly outshone by our pride in their heroism. Such blows of fate may be a setback to the German sportsman, but his spirit will not be broken by them for ever.

To which Dr Bauer added the following:

Tragedy overshadows Man's attempts on Nanga Parbat, Mount Everest and Kangchenjunga. Many have gone forth . . . many have not returned . . . none has reached the goal. Will that goal ever be reached by man? Or must he admit that the earth's highest is to be denied him? If we ourselves cannot answer this question there are those who could: those who have lived before us, who for countless ages have left their homes to attempt and overcome the seemingly impossible. Their spirit, prevailing in the men of our race, will always give the same answer.

That this spirit was abundantly alive in the men who approached Nanga Parbat in 1937 is clear from their diaries, which they filled with their thoughts during the assault on the mountain to the last day of their lives. They form the basis of this book, so that those who are no longer with us may yet speak to us once more.

These sentiments find little or no place in the Englishman's conception of pure sport and it is clear from the diary extracts quoted in the ensuing pages that these German mountaineers felt that their exploits held a deeper meaning. As Dr Bauer says in his Introduction, the motive underlying the German Himalayan ex-

peditions is to be sought in the events of 1914-18 and Germany's reawakened sense of nationalism which was their result; the members of the fateful Nanga Parbat expedition did not regard themselves as mere sportsmen, but men with a noble mission in life, offering a contribution to Germany's reassertion as a nation to be reckoned with, proving to the world that Germans also are capable of great feats of endurance. It is essential to grasp this fact in order to understand much in the present book which seems alien to the English mind.

National peculiarities aside, however, it is still not unnatural, it seems in fact inevitable, that Dr Bauer's mood should not be the light-hearted one of a sportsman summing up a crafty opponent. Any sport worth pursuing is never without some element of danger, but there is also tragedy in the Germans' experiences on Nanga Parbat. The four victims of the 1934 Nanga Parbat expedition had truly tragic ends: Drexel had fallen ill and died during the ascent and the assault was continued under the shadow of grief; Wieland lay down and died in the snow from sheer exhaustion; Welzenbach, worn out from his battle with the blizzard, went to sleep in his tent never to wake again, and Merkl, the leader of the expedition, said to have exceptional powers of resistance, died a slow death while within shouting distance of the camp; his friends, struggling ineffectually in the deep snow to reach him, must have suffered the tortures of the damned. Is it surprising that some are slow in accepting the word 'sport' as the expression of all that mountaineering means? . . .

At the time of writing Dr Bauer is leading the fourth German Nanga Parbat expedition; he is proving that he and his men are still undeterred, but it seems that the tragedies of 1934 and 1937 will have to be vindicated before Nanga Parbat and the German climber meet in the spirit of sportsmanship.

PHOTOGRAPHIC NOTES

Edited by F. S. Smythe

23. EXPOSURE EXPLAINED (3)

Although brilliance of light and illumination of the subject are the most vital factors controlling photographic exposure, the quality of the light is also of great importance.

'Visible light' is a series of vibrations in the ether differing from radiant heat and wireless waves in that the wave-lengths are shorter. The longest 'visible' ethereal vibrations are described as 'deep red' and the shortest as 'light violet'. Ultra-violet and X-rays are examples of short wave 'invisible light', while the infra-red rays lie between the longest 'visible' vibrations and the heat waves.

An emulsion of silver bromide is normally most sensitive to light of the shorter wave-lengths; thus, ultra-violet and blue light will affect a simple emulsion of silver bromide more readily than green or red light. Such an emulsion, in fact, is almost completely insensitive to the darker shades of red.

Because of this, ultra-violet light and blue light are said to be more 'actinic' than green and red light. When judging exposure, therefore, the photographer who wishes to take into consideration the actinic or photographic quality of the light to which he is exposing his film, must know enough about light to be able to judge whether he is working with a predominance of short or long waves.

As sunbathers know, brilliant sunshine contains a large proportion of ultra-violet light. In certain conditions this excess of invisible radiation must be allowed for when adjusting stop and shutter speed. For example, at high altitudes there is an intensification of ultra-violet light because the filter-effect of the atmosphere is reduced. At ordinary altitudes in the presence of green foliage, even in open spaces, disproportionately wide apertures or longer exposures are necessary owing to the

absorption of the shorter light waves by the chlorophyll or green pigment in the leaves of the plants.

Photography in city streets, too, may be very deceptive; for in the first place a smoke-laden atmosphere absorbs much ultra-

violet light, while high buildings will shut out a large proportion of 'scattered' radiation.

On the other hand, it sometimes occurs that on dull days in the open country, the presence of mist or thin layers of cloud may cause a very wide scattering of ultra-violet radiations which makes it possible

to use the same stop and shutter speed as under a cloudless sky.


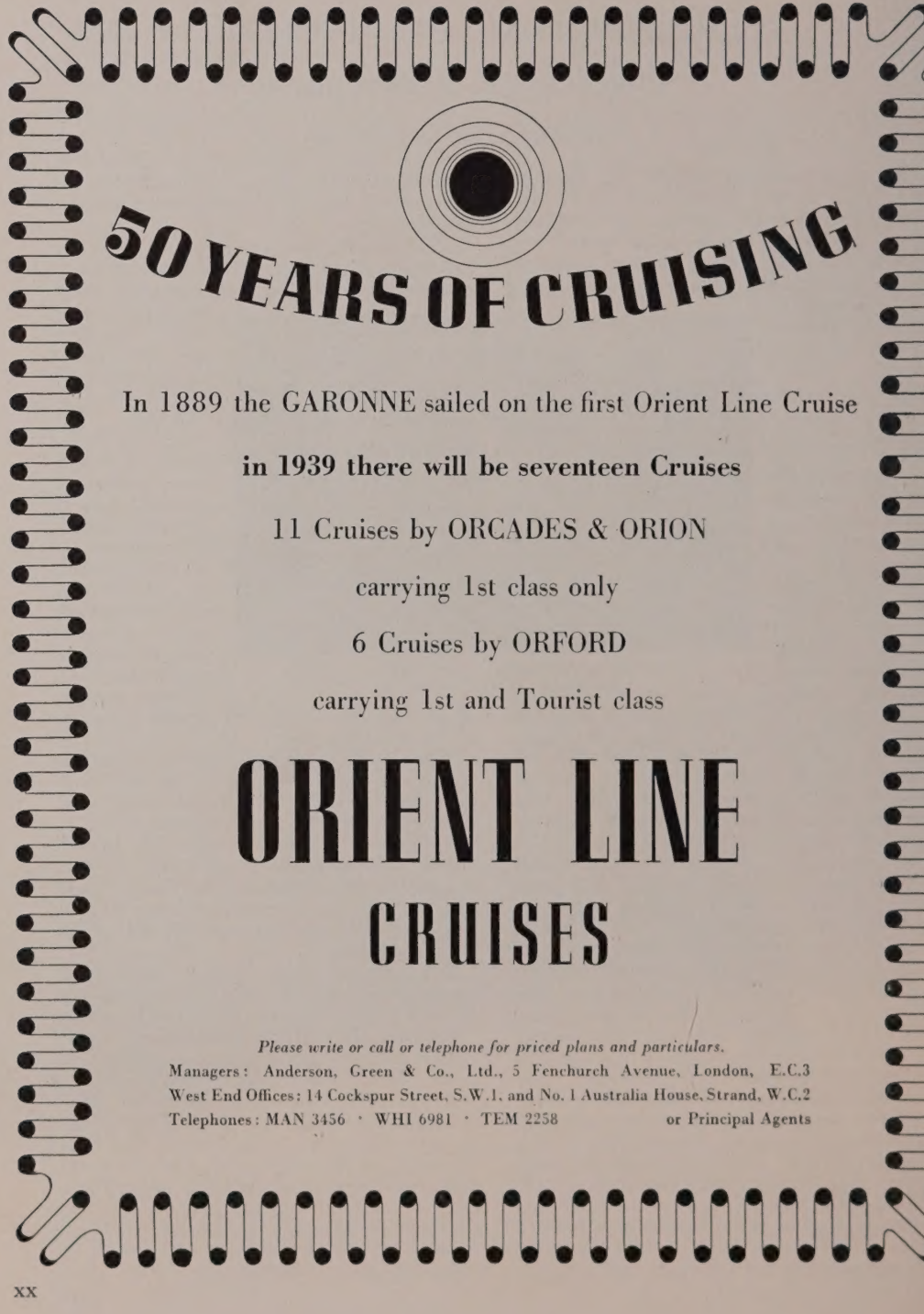
When taking photographs at night by artificial illumination, the actinic quality of the light used is of special importance. 'Over-run' electric light lamps, such as 'Photofloods', are made with the highest actinic value possible, though this is never as great as the brilliance of the lamps might suggest, since they are much weaker in blue and ultra-violet content than daylight of the same brightness.

If the normal silver bromide emulsion is treated with a dye, the light absorbed by that dye will help to 'expose' the bromide grains.

For example, orthochromatic material may contain pink dyes absorbing, and exposing for, green rays. Similarly, by means of a series of dyes, emulsions can now be produced which are sensitive in different degrees to all colours of the visible spectrum. Such films are described as 'panchromatic' and these are designed to produce as faithfully as possible a range of values in monochrome representing the colour-brightnesses in the original subject. Thus panchromatic films are superior to all others for general photography.



Pictures showing relative colour-rendering qualities of (right) panchromatic and (left) regular film.



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